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THE  
ILIAD OF HOMER

*TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BLANK VERSE*

L.C. ✓

BY

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

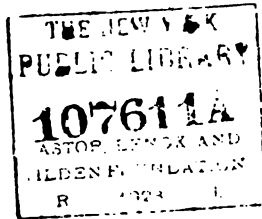
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# THE ILIAD.



# THE ILIAD.

## BOOK XIII.

WHEN Jove had brought the Trojans and their chief,  
Hector, beside the ships, he left them there  
To toil and struggle and endure, while he  
Turned his resplendent eyes upon the land  
Of Thracian horsemen, and the Mysians, skilled       5  
To combat hand to hand, and the famed tribe  
Of long-lived Hippomulgi, reared on milk,  
And the most just of men. On Troy no more  
He turned those glorious eyes, for now he deemed  
That none of all the gods would seek to aid       10  
Either the Greeks or Trojans in the strife.

The monarch Neptune kept no idle watch;  
For he in Thracian Samos, dark with woods,  
Aloft upon the highest summit sat,  
O'erlooking thence the tumult of the war;       15



For thence could he behold the Idæan mount,  
And Priam's city, and the Grecian fleet.  
There, coming from the ocean-deeps, he sat,  
And pitied the Greek warriors put to rout  
Before the Trojans, and was wroth with Jove. 20  
Soon he descended from those rugged steeps,  
And trod the earth with rapid strides; the hills  
And forests quaked beneath the immortal feet  
Of Neptune as he walked. Three strides he took,  
And at the fourth reached Ægæ, where he stopped, 25  
And where his sumptuous palace-halls were built,  
Deep down in ocean, golden, glittering, proof  
Against decay of time. These when he reached,  
He yoked his swift and brazen-footed steeds,  
With manes of flowing gold, to draw his car, 30  
And put on golden mail, and took his scourge,  
Wrought of fine gold, and climbed the chariot-seat,  
And rode upon the waves. The whales came forth  
From their deep haunts, and frolicked round his way:  
They knew their king. The waves rejoicing smoothed 35  
A path, and rapidly the coursers flew;  
Nor was the brazen axle wet below.  
And thus they brought him to the Grecian fleet.  
Deep in the sea there is a spacious cave,

*Book XIII.*

3

Between the rugged Imbrus and the isle 40  
Of Tenedos. There Neptune, he who shakes  
The shores, held back his steeds, took off their yoke,  
Gave them ambrosial food, and, binding next  
Their feet with golden fetters which no power  
Might break or loosen, so that they might wait 45  
Their lord's return, he sought the Grecian host.

Still did the Trojans, rushing on in crowds,  
Like flames or like a tempest, follow close  
Hector, the son of Priam; still their rage  
Abated not; with stormy cries they came; 50  
They hoped to seize the fleet and slay the Greeks  
Beside it. But the power who swathes the earth  
And shakes it, Neptune, coming from the deep,  
Revived the valor of the Greeks. He took  
The shape of Calchas and his powerful voice, 55  
And thus to either Ajax, who yet stemmed  
The battle with a resolute heart, he spake:—

“O chieftains! yours it is to save the host,  
Recalling your old valor, with no thought  
Of fatal flight. Elsewhere I feel no dread 60  
Of what the daring sons of Troy may do  
Who climb the wall in throngs; the well-greaved Greeks  
Will meet them bravely. But where Hector leads,

Fierce as a flame, his squadrons, he who boasts  
To be a son of sovereign Jove, I fear 65  
Lest we should sorely suffer. May the gods  
Strengthen your hearts to stand against the foe,  
And flinch not, and exhort the rest to stand,  
And drive him back, audacious as he is,  
From the swift ships, though Jove should urge him on." 70

Thus earth-surrounding Neptune said, and touched  
Each hero with his sceptre, filled their hearts  
With valor, gave new lightness to their limbs  
And feet and hands, and then, as when a hawk  
Shoots swiftly from some lofty precipice 75  
And chases o'er the plain another bird,  
So swiftly Neptune, shaker of the shores,  
Darted from them away. Oïleus' son  
Perceived the immortal presence first, and thus  
At once to Telamonian Ajax spake:— 80

"Some god, O Ajax, from the Olympian hill,  
Wearing the augur's form, hath bid us fight  
Beside the ships; nor can it be the seer  
Calchas, for well I marked his feet and legs  
As he departed; easily by these 85  
The gods are known. I feel a spirit roused  
In my own bosom eager to engage

*Book XIII.*

5

In the fierce strife; my very feet below,  
And hands above, take part in the desire."

And thus the son of Telamon replied:—

90

"So also these strong hands that grasp the spear  
Burn eagerly to wield it, and my heart  
Is full of courage. I am hurried on  
By both my feet, and vehemently long  
To try alone the combat with this chief  
Of boundless valor, Hector, Priam's son."

95

Thus they conferred, rejoicing as they felt  
That ardor for the battle which the god  
Had breathed into their hearts. Meantime he roused  
The Achaians at the rear, who in their ships  
Sought respite, and whose limbs were faint with toil,  
And their hearts sad to see the Trojan host  
With tumult pouring o'er the lofty wall.  
As they beheld, the tears came gushing forth  
From underneath their lids; they little hoped  
For rescue from destruction; but when came  
The power that shakes the shores, he woke anew  
The spirit of their valiant phalanxes.  
Teucer he first addressed, and Leitus,  
The hero Peneleus and Thoas next,  
Deipyrus, Meriones expert

100

105

110

In battle, and Antilochus his peer,  
And thus exhorted them with wingèd words:—  
    “Shame on you, Argive youths! I put my trust  
In your tried valor to defend our fleet; 115  
But if ye fear to face the perilous fight,  
The day has risen which shall behold us fall  
Vanquished before the Trojans. O ye gods!  
These eyes have seen a marvel, a strange sight  
And terrible, which I had never thought 120  
Could be,—the Trojans close upon our ships,  
They who, erewhile, were like the timid deer  
That wander in the wood an easy prey  
To jackals, pards, and wolves,—weak things, unapt  
For combat, fleeing, but without an aim. 125  
Such were the Trojans, who till now ne’er dared  
Withstand the might and prowess of the Greeks  
Even for an hour. But now, afar from Troy  
They give us battle at the hollow ships,  
All through our general’s fault, and through the sloth 130  
Of the Greek warriors, who, displeased with him,  
Fight not for their swift galleys, but are slain  
Beside them. Yet although our sovereign chief,  
Atrides Agamemnon, may have done  
Foul wrong, dishonoring the swift-footed son 135

Of Peleus, still ye cannot without blame  
Decline the combat. Let us then repair  
The mischief done; the hearts of valiant men  
Are soon appeased. And not without the loss  
Of honor can your fiery courage sleep, 140  
Since ye are known the bravest of the host.  
I would not chide the weak, unwarlike man  
For shrinking from the combat; but for you,—  
I look on you with anger in my heart.  
Weaklings! ye soon will bring upon yourselves 145  
Some sorer evil if ye loiter thus.  
Let each of you bethink him of the shame  
And infamy impending. Terrible  
The struggle is before us. Hector storms  
The ships, loud-shouting Hector; he has burst 150  
The gate and broken the protecting bar.”  
So Neptune spake, encouraging the Greeks.  
While firmly stood the serried phalanxes  
Round either Ajax, nor could Mars himself,  
Nor Pallas, musterer of armed hosts, 155  
Reprove their order. There the flower of Greece  
Waited the Trojans and their noble chief,  
Spear beside spear, and shield by shield, so close  
That buckler pressed on buckler, helm on helm,

And man on man. The plumes of horse-hair touched 160  
Each other as they nodded on the crests  
Of the bright helms, so close the warriors stood.  
The lances quivered in the fearless hands  
Of warriors eager to advance and strike  
The enemy. But the men of Troy began 165  
The assault; the fiery Hector was the first  
To rush against the Greeks. As when a stone  
Rolls from a cliff before a wintry flood  
That sweeps it down the steep, when mighty rains  
Have worn away the props that held it fast; 170  
It rolls and bounds on high; the woods around  
Crash, as it tears its unresisted way  
Along the slope until it reach the plain,  
And there, however urged, moves on no more;—  
So Hector, menacing to cut his way 175  
Through tents and galleys to the very sea,  
Slaying as he went forward, when he now  
Met the firm phalanxes and pressed them close,  
Stopped suddenly; the sons of Greece withstood  
His onset and repulsed it, striking him 180  
With swords and two-edged spears, and made the chief  
Give way before the shock. He lifted up  
His voice and shouted to the Trojans thus:—

“Trojans and Lycians and Dardanians skilled  
In fighting hand to hand, stand firm. Not long 185  
Will the Greeks bide my onset, though drawn up  
Square as a tower in close array. My spear,  
I trust, will scatter them, if true it be  
That Juno’s husband, Sovereign of the gods,  
And Lord of thunders, prompts my arm to-day,” 190

He spake, and kindled in the breasts of all  
Fresh courage. In the band Deiphobus  
Marched proudly, Priam’s son, with his round shield  
Before him, walking with a quick, light step  
Behind its shelter. Then Meriones 195  
Aimed at the chief his glittering spear; the point  
Missed not; it struck the orb of bullock’s hide,  
Yet did not pierce it, for the weapon broke  
Just at the neck. Deiphobus held forth  
His shield far from him, dreading to receive 200  
A spear-thrust from the brave Meriones.  
Vexed thus to lose the victory, and the spear  
Snapped by the blow, Meriones fell back  
Into the column of his friends, and passed  
Hastily toward the camp and ships, to bring 205  
A powerful spear that stood within his tent,  
While others fought, and fearful was the din.



Then Teucer first, the son of Telamon,  
Smote gallant Imbrius, son of Mentor, lord  
Of many steeds. He, ere the Greeks had come 210  
To Troy, dwelt at Pedæum and espoused  
Medesicasta, Priam's spurious child.  
But when the well-oared galleys of the Greeks  
Mustered at Troy, he also came, and there  
Was eminent among her chiefs, and dwelt 215  
With Priam, and was honored as his son.  
The son of Telamon beneath the ear  
Pierced him with his long javelin, and drew forth  
The weapon. Headlong to the earth he fell.  
As on a mountain height, descried from far, 220  
Hewn by a brazen axe, an ash is felled  
And lays its tender sprays upon the ground,  
Thus Imbrius fell, and round him in his fall  
Clashed his bright armor. Teucer sprang in haste  
To spoil the dead, but Hector hurled at him 225  
His shining spear; the wary Teucer stepped  
Aside, and just escaped the brazen blade.  
It struck Amphinomachus, Cteatus' son,  
And Actor's grandson; as he came to join  
The battle, he was smitten in the breast, 230  
And fell, his armor clashing round his limbs.

Then Hector flew in haste to tear away  
From the large-souled Amphimachus the helm  
That cased his temples. Ajax saw, and hurled  
His glittering spear at Hector as he came: 235  
It made no wound; for Hector stood equipped  
All o'er in formidable brass. The spear  
Struck on the bossy shield with such a shock  
As forced him to recoil, and leave unspoiled  
The bodies, which the Achaians dragged away. 240  
For Stichius and Menestheus, chief among  
The Athenians, bore the dead Amphimachus  
To the Greek camp, while the two men of might,  
The chieftains Ajax, lifted Imbrius up;  
And as two lions, bearing off among 245  
The close-grown shrubs a goat, which they have snatched  
From sharp-toothed dogs, uplift it in their jaws  
Above the ground, so the two warriors raised  
The corpse of Imbrius, and stripped off the mail,  
While, angered that Amphilochus was slain, 250  
Oileus' son struck from the tender neck  
The head, and sent it far among the crowd,  
Whirled like a ball, to fall at Hector's feet.  
Meantime was Neptune moved with grief to see  
His grandson perish in that desperate fray, 255

And passed among the Achaian tents and ships  
Encouraging the men, and planning woes  
For Ilium. There he met Idomeneus,  
Expert to wield the spear, as he returned  
From caring for a comrade who had left 260  
The battle, wounded in the knee, and whom  
His friends had carried in. Idomeneus  
Had called the surgeons to his aid, and now  
Was hastening to the field, intent to bear  
His part in battle. Him the monarch god 265  
Of ocean thus addressed, but first he took  
The voice of Thoas, King Andræmon's son,  
Whose father ruled the Ætolians through the bounds  
Of Pleuron, and in lofty Calydon,  
And like a god was honored in the land. 270

“O counsellor of Crete, Idomeneus!  
Where are the threats which late the sons of Greece  
Uttered against the Trojans?” Promptly came  
The Cretan leader's answer: “No man here,  
O Thoas, seems blameworthy, for we all 275  
Are skilled in war, nor does unmanly fear  
Hold any back; nor from the difficult strife  
Does sloth detain one warrior. So it is  
Doubtless that it seems good to Saturn's son,

The All-disposer, that the Greeks, afar 280  
From Argos, should ingloriously fall  
And perish. Thoas, thou wert ever brave,  
And didst exhort the laggards. Cease not now  
To combat, cease not to exhort the rest."

And Neptune, he who shakes the earth, rejoined:— 285  
"Idomeneus, whoever keeps aloof  
From battle, willingly, to-day, may he  
Never return from Troy, but be the prey  
Of dogs. Take thou thy arms and come with me,  
For we must quit ourselves like men, and strive 290  
To aid our cause, although we be but two.  
Great is the strength of feeble arms combined,  
And we can combat even with the brave."

So speaking, Neptune turned to share the toils  
Of war. Idomeneus, who now had reached 295  
His princely tent, put on his glorious mail,  
And seized two spears, and flew upon his way,  
Like lightning grasped by Saturn's son and flung  
Quivering above Olympus' gleaming peak,  
A sign to mortals, dazzled by the blaze, 300  
So glittered, as he ran, his brazen mail.  
His fellow-warrior, good Meriones,  
Met him beside the tent, for he had come

To fetch a brazen javelin thence, and thus  
The stout Idomeneus addressed his friend:— 305

“O son of Molus, swift Meriones,  
Dearest of all my comrades! Why hast thou  
Thus left the battle-field? Hast thou a wound,—  
A weapon’s point that galls thee? Dost thou bring  
A message to me? Think not that I sit 310  
Within my tent an idler; I must fight.”

Discreetly did Meriones reply:—  
“Idomeneus, whose sovereign counsels rule  
The well-armed Cretans, I am come to seek  
A spear if one be left within thy tents. 315  
I broke the one I bore, in hurling it  
Against the shield of fierce Deiphobus.”

The Cretan chief, Idomeneus, rejoined:—  
“If spears thou seek, there stand within my tent  
Twenty and one against the shining walls. 320  
I took them from slain Trojans. ’T is my wont  
Never to fight at distance from the foe,  
And therefore have I spears, and bossy shields,  
And helms, and body-mail of polished brass.”

Then spake in turn discreet Meriones:— 325  
“Within my tent are also many spoils  
Won from the Trojans, and in my black ship;

But they are far away. I do not think  
That I forget what valor is. I fight  
Among the foremost in the glorious strife  
Where'er the battle calls me. Other men  
Among the well-armed Greeks may not have seen  
What I perform, but thou must know me well."

Idomeneus, the Cretan leader, spake:—

"I know thy courage well. What need hast thou  
To speak as thou hast done? If all of us,  
The bravest of the Greeks, were set apart  
To form an ambush;—for an ambush tries  
And shows men's valor; there the craven, there  
The brave, is known; the coward's color comes  
And goes; his spirit is not calm within  
His bosom, so that he can rest awhile  
And tremble not; he shifts his place; he sits  
On both his feet; his heart beats audibly  
Within his breast; his teeth at thought of death  
Chatter; the brave man's color changes not,  
Nor when with other warriors he sits down  
In ambush is he troubled, but he longs  
To rise and mingle in the desperate fray;—  
For thee, in such an ambush, none could blame  
Thy courage or thy skill. If there the foe

Should wound thee from afar, or smite thee near,  
The weapon would not strike thy neck behind,  
Or pierce thy back, but enter at thy breast  
Or stomach, as thou wert advancing fast 355  
Among the foremost. But enough of this.  
Come! stand we here no longer, idiot-like,  
Lest some one chide us sharply. Hasten thou,  
And bring a sturdy javelin from the tent."

He spake. Meriones, like Mars in port 360  
And swiftness, hastened to the tent and brought  
A brazen spear, and joined Idomeneus,  
Eager for battle. As the god of war,  
The man-destroyer, comes into the field,  
With Terror, his strong-limbed and dauntless son, 365  
Following and striking fear into the heart  
Of the most resolute warrior, when from Thrace  
They issue armed against the Ephyri,  
Or else against the Phlegyans large of soul,  
And hearken not to both the hosts, but give 370  
To one the victory; so Meriones  
Advanced to battle with Idomeneus,  
Leaders of heroes both, and both equipped  
In glittering helms. And first Meriones  
Spake and addressed his fellow-warrior thus:— 375

“Son of Deucalion, at which point wilt thou  
Enter the throng? Upon the army’s right,  
Its centre, or its left? The long-haired Greeks  
Seem most to need our aid upon the left.”

Then spoke Idomeneus, in turn, the prince 380  
Of Cretans: “At the centre of the fleet  
Are others who will guard it. Posted there  
Are either Ajax and the most expert  
Of Grecian archers, Teucer, not less skilled  
In standing fight, and amply will they task 385  
The arm of Hector, Priam’s son, though bent  
On desperate conflict, and though passing fierce.  
With all his fierceness, he will find it hard  
To quell their prowess, never yet o’ercome,  
And fire the ships, unless Saturnian Jove 390  
Himself should cast on them the flaming torch.  
Nor yet will Telamonian Ajax yield  
To any man of mortal birth, or reared  
Upon the grains of Ceres, or whom brass  
Or ponderous stones can wound. He would not own 395  
The warlike son of Peleus mightier  
Than he in standing fight, although in speed  
He vies not with him. Lead us then to join  
The army’s left, that we may learn at once



Whether our fate in battle shall confer  
Glory on other men, or theirs on us." 400

So spake the chief. Meriones, the peer  
Of Mars in swiftness, hastened till he joined  
The army where his comrade bade. The foe  
Beheld Idomeneus, who like a flame 405  
Swept on with his companion all in arms  
Gloriously wrought; they raised from rank to rank  
The battle-cry, and met him as he came,  
And hand to hand, before the galleys' sterns  
Was waged the combat. As when storms arise, 410  
Blown up by piping winds, when dust lies loose  
Along the roads, a spreading cloud of dust  
Fills the wide air, so came the battle on  
Between the bands that struggled eagerly  
To slay each other. All along the line 415  
The murderous conflict bristled with long spears  
That tore the flesh; the brazen splendor, shot  
From gleaming helmets and from burnished mail  
And shining bucklers, all in narrow space,  
Dazzled the eyes. Brave-hearted would he be, 420  
The man who, gazing on it, could have seen  
The furious strife rejoicing or unmoved.

Meantime the potent sons of Saturn each

Favored a different side, and planned new toils  
For all the warriors. Jupiter had willed 435  
That Hector and the Trojans should prevail,  
Yet had he not decreed the Achaian host  
To perish before Troy; he only sought  
To honor Thetis and her large-souled son.  
But Neptune, mingling with the Greeks, aroused 430  
Their martial spirit. From the hoary deep  
He came unmarked, for deeply was he grieved  
To see the Greeks give way before the host  
Of Troy, and he was wroth with Jupiter.  
Both gods were of one race, and owed their birth 435  
To the same parents; but the elder-born  
Was Jupiter, and wiser. For that cause  
Not openly did Neptune aid the Greeks,  
But, as by stealth, disguised in human form,  
Moved through their army and encouraged them 440  
To combat. Thus it was the potent twain  
Each drew, with equal hand, the net of strife  
And fearful havoc, which no power could break  
Or loosen, stretched o'er both the warring hosts,  
And laying many a warrior low in death. 445  
And now, although his brows were strewn with gray,  
Idomeneus, encouraging the Greeks,

Rushed on the Trojans, and revived the fight.  
He slew Orthryoneus, who just before,  
Drawn by the rumor of the war, had left 450  
Cabesus, and now made a lover's suit  
For Priam's fairest daughter. Without dower  
He sought to wed Cassandra, promising  
A vast exploit,—to drive the Greeks from Troy,  
In spite of all their valor. The old king 455  
Consented that the maiden should be his;  
And now he fought, and trusted to fulfil  
His promise. But Idomeneus took aim,  
And cast his glittering javelin at the youth.  
It struck him marching proudly on, nor stopped 460  
The weapon at the brazen mail, but pierced  
The stomach. With a clash the warrior fell,  
And thus the victor boasted over him:—  
“Orthryoneus, I deem thee worthy of praise  
Beyond all other men, if thou perform 465  
What thou hast undertaken,—to defend  
Dardanian Priam, who has promised thee  
His daughter. We would make a compact too,  
And will perform it,—to bestow on thee  
A spouse, the fairest daughter of the house 470  
Of Atreus' son, and we will send for her

To Argos, if thou join us, and lay waste  
The well-built Ilium. Now, then, follow me,  
And at the ships which brought us we will treat  
Of marriage, and will make no niggard terms.” 475

So spake Idomeneus, and dragged the slain  
Through the sharp conflict by the foot. He met  
Asius, who walked before his car, and came  
To avenge his friend. The attending charioteer  
Behind him reined the steeds, that they should breathe 480  
Over the shoulders of their lord, who sought  
To smite Idomeneus. The Greek was first  
To strike; he plunged the spear into his throat  
Below the chin, and drove the weapon through.  
The Trojan fell to earth as falls an oak, 485  
Poplar, or stately pine, which woodmen fell  
With their sharp axes on the mountain-side,  
To form a galley's beam. So there he lay  
Stretched out before his coursers and his car,  
And gnashed his teeth, and clenched the bloody dust. 490  
The charioteer, amazed, and losing power  
Of action, dared not turn the horses back  
To bear him from the foe. Antilochus  
The warlike cast his spear, and in the midst  
Transfixed him. Little did the brazen mail 495

Avail to stay the blade, which cleft its way  
 Into the stomach. With a sudden gasp  
 He toppled from the sumptuous chariot-seat,  
 And large-souled Nestor's son, Antilochus,  
 Drave with the chariot to the well-armed Greeks. 500  
 Deiphobus, who sorrowed for the fate  
 Of Asius, drawing near Idomeneus,  
 Hurl'd at him his bright spear. The Greek beheld,  
 As face to face they stood, and scaped the stroke,  
 Covered by his round shield, two-handled, strong 505  
 With bullocks' hides and glittering brass. With this  
 He hid himself, close couched within, and turned  
 The brazen point aside. The buckler rang  
 Shrilly; the weapon glanced away, yet flew  
 Not vainly from the Trojan's powerful hand: 510  
 It struck Hypsenor, son of Hippasus,  
 The shepherd of the people, on the side  
 Where lies the liver, just below the breast.  
 His knees gave way; he fell; Deiphobus  
 Thus shouted o'er the dead his empty boast:— 515  
 "Not unavenged lies Asius, and no doubt,  
 In journeying to the massy gates and wall  
 Of Hades, will rejoice that I have sent  
 A soul to be companion of his way."

He spake; and at his boast the Greeks were moved 520  
With anger,—most of all Antilochus  
The warlike; yet he left not to the foe  
His slain companion, but made haste to hold  
His shield above him. His beloved friends,  
Mecisteus, son of Echius, and the prince 525  
Alastor, lifted up, with many a groan,  
The corpse, and bore it to the roomy ships.

Meantime the valor of Idomeneus  
Remitted not; he vehemently longed  
To cover many a Trojan with the night 530  
Of death, or fall himself with clashing arms,  
In warring to defend the ships of Greece.  
The brave Alcathoüs, the beloved son  
Of Æsyetus, whom Anchises made  
His son-in-law,—for he had given to him 535  
Hippodameia, eldest-born of all  
His daughters, whom her parents, while she dwelt  
With them, loved dearly, fair and wise beyond  
All other maidens of her age, and skilled  
In household arts; so that the noblest prince 540  
Of the broad Trojan kingdom made her his;—  
Him, by the weapon of Idomeneus,  
Did Neptune bring to death. The sparkling eyes

Grew dim, and stiffened were the shapely limbs,  
For neither could he flee nor turn aside; 545  
But as he stood before him, column-like,  
Or like a towering tree, Idomeneus  
Transfixed him in the bosom with his spear.  
The brazen coat of mail gave way, which oft  
Had saved him, breaking with a sharp, shrill sound 550  
Before the severing blade. He fell to earth  
With noise; the spear stood planted in his heart,  
And as he panted quivered through its length,  
Yet soon its murderous force was spent and still.  
And then the victor boasted thus aloud:— 555  
    “Deiphobus, does this appear to thee  
A fair return, when three are slain for one,  
Or hast thou boasted idly? Yet do thou,  
Vain as thou art, stand forth and face me here,  
And I will teach thee of what race I am,— 560  
An offshoot of the stock of Jove, whose son  
Was Minos, guardian of our Crete, and he  
Was father of the good Deucalion.  
Deucalion’s son am I, and I am king  
O’er many men in the broad isle of Crete. 565  
My galleys brought me thence to be the dread  
Of thee, thy father, and the men of Troy.”

He spake. Deiphobus, irresolute,  
Stood doubting whether to retreat and bring  
Some other of the heroic sons of Troy  
To aid him, or to try the fight alone. 570

As thus he mused, it seemed most wise to seek  
Æneas. Him he found withdrawn among  
The rear of the army, for he was displeased  
With noble Priam, who had paid his worth 575  
With light esteem. Deiphobus approached,  
And thus with wingèd words accosted him:—

“Æneas, counsellor of Troy, if thou  
Hadst ever a regard to him who was  
Thy sister’s husband, it becomes thee now 580  
To avenge him. Follow me, and help avenge  
Alcathoüs, guardian of thy tender years,  
Slain by the spear of famed Idomeneus.”

He spake; and at his words Æneas felt  
His courage rise. Impatient for the fight, 585  
He went to meet Idomeneus; yet fear  
Fell not upon the Greek as if he were  
A puny boy: he stood and kept his ground.  
As, when a mountain boar, unterrified,  
Waits in the wilderness the hunter-crew, 590  
That come with mighty din, his bristly back



Rises, his eyes shoot fire, he whets his tusks,  
And fiercely keeps both dogs and men at bay,—  
So did Idomeneus, expert to wield

The spear, await Æneas hastening on

595

With fury. Not a backward step he made,

But called upon his warrior-friends aloud,

Looking at Aphareus, Ascalaphus,

Deipyrus, Meriones, and last

Antilochus, all skilled in arts of war,

600

And thus exhorted them with wingèd words:—

“Haste hither, O my friends, and bring me aid.

I stand alone, in dread of the approach

Of swift Æneas, who comes fiercely on,

Powerful to slay, and in his prime of youth,

605

The highest vigor of the human frame.

Yet, were our years the same, that chief or I

Would quickly triumph at the other's cost.”

He spake, and all with one accord drew near

And stood by him, with shields obliquely held

610

Upon their shoulders. On the other side

Æneas cheered his comrades on. He fixed

His look on Paris, and Deiphobus,

And nobly-born Agenor, who, like him,

Were leaders of the Trojans. After these

615

The soldiers followed, as the thronging flock  
Follow the ram that leads them to the fount  
From pasture, and the shepherd's heart is pleased.

So was Æneas glad at heart to see

The multitude of warriors following him.

620

Then mingled they in battle hand to hand

Around Alcathoüs, with their ponderous spears,

And fearfully upon their bosoms rang

The brass, as through the struggling crowd they aimed

Their weapons at each other. Two brave men,

625

Æneas and Idomeneus, the peers

Of Mars, conspicuous o'er their fellows, strove

With cruel brass to rend each other's limbs.

And first Æneas cast his spear to smite

Idomeneus, who saw it as it came,

630

And shunned it. Plunging in the earth beyond,

It stood and quivered; it had left in vain

The Trojan's powerful hand. Idomeneus

Next smote CEnomaüs: the spear brake through

His hollow corslet at the waist; it pierced

635

And drank the entrails: down amid the dust

He fell, and grasped the earth with dying hand.

Idomeneus plucked forth the massy spear,

But, pressed by hostile weapons, ventured not

To strip the sumptuous armor from the dead; 640  
Since now no more the sinews of his feet  
Were firm to bear him rushing to retake  
His spear, or start aside from hostile spears.  
Wherefore in standing fight he warded off  
The evil hour, nor trusted to his feet 645  
To bear him fleetly from the field. He moved  
Slowly away, and now Deiphobus,  
Who long had hated him and bitterly,  
Aimed at him his bright spear; it missed its mark,  
And struck Ascalaphus, the son of Mars. 650  
The weapon cleft the shoulder of the Greek,  
Who fell amid the dust, and clenched the earth.  
Not yet the clamorous Mars, of passionate mood,  
Had heard that in the fray his son was slain;  
But on the summit of the Olympian mount 655  
He sat, o'ercanopied by golden clouds,  
Restrained from combat by the will of Jove,  
With other gods, forbidden, like himself,  
To aid the combatants. Meantime around  
Ascalaphus the combat hand to hand 660  
Still raged. Deiphobus had torn away  
The slain man's shining helm, when suddenly  
Meriones sprang forward, spear in hand,

And smote him on the arm ; the wounded limb  
Let fall the helm, resounding as it fell, 665  
And with a vulture's leap Meriones  
Rushed toward him, plucking out from the torn flesh  
The spear, and falling back among the crowd.  
Polites, brother of the wounded, threw  
Both arms around his waist, and bore him off 670  
From the loud din of conflict, till he reached  
His swift-paced steeds, that waited in the rear  
Of battle, with their chariot nobly wrought  
And charioteer. These took him back to Troy,  
Heavily groaning and in pain, the blood 675  
Yet gushing from the newly wounded limb.  
Still fought the other warriors, and the noise  
Of a perpetual tumult filled the air.  
Æneas, rushing upon Aphareus,  
Caletor's son, who turned to face him, thrust 680  
A sharp spear through his throat. With drooping head,  
And carrying shield and helmet to the ground,  
He fell, and rendered up his soul in death.  
Antilochus, as Thoön turned away,  
Attacked and smote him, cutting off the vein 685  
That passes through the body to the neck.  
This he divided sheer ; the warrior fell

Backward, and lay in dust, with hands outstretched  
To his beloved friends. Antilochus  
Flew to the slain, and from his shoulders stripped 690  
The armor, casting cautious glances round;  
While toward him pressed the Trojans on all sides,  
Striking the fair broad buckler with their darts,  
Yet could not even score with pointed brass  
The tender skin of Nestor's son; for still 695  
Neptune, the shaker of the sea-coast, kept  
Watch o'er him while the weapons round him showered.  
Yet he withdrew not from his foes, but moved  
Among the crowd, nor idle was his spear,  
But wielded right and left, and still he watched 700  
With resolute mind the time to strike the foe  
At distance, or assault him near at hand.  
The son of Asius, Adamas, beheld  
The hero meditating thus, and struck,  
In close attack, the middle of his shield 705  
With a sharp brazen spear. The dark-haired god  
Who rules the deep denied to Adamas  
The life he sought, and weakened the hard stroke.  
Part of the Trojan's weapon, like a stake  
Hardened by fire, stood fixed within the shield, 710  
Part lay on earth, and he who cast it slunk

*Book XIII.*

31

Among his comrades to avoid his fate.  
Meriones, pursuing with his spear,  
Smote him between the navel and the groin,  
Where deadliest are the wounds in battle given 715  
To man's unhappy race. He planted there  
The cruel blade, and Adamas, who fell,  
Writhed panting round it, as a bullock bound  
By cowherds on the mountain with strong cords  
Pants as they lead him off against his will. 720  
So wounded, Adamas drew heavy breath,  
And yet not long. The brave Meriones,  
Approaching, plucked the weapon forth, and night  
Came o'er the eyes of Adamas. At hand  
Stood Helenus, and struck Deipyrus 725  
Upon the temple with his ponderous sword,  
Of Thracian make, and cut the three-coned helm  
Away, and dashed it to the ground; it rolled  
Between a Grecian warrior's feet, who stooped  
And took it up, while o'er its owner's eyes 730  
The darkness gathered. Grieved at this, the son  
Of Atreus, Menelaus great in war,  
Rushed forward, threatening royal Helenus.  
He brandished his sharp spear; the Trojan drew  
His bow; advancing, one to hurl a lance, 735

And one to send an arrow. Priam's son  
Let fly a shaft at Menelaus' breast.  
The bitter missile from the hollow mail  
Glanced off. As when from the broad winnowing-fan  
On some wide threshing-floor the swarthy beans, 740  
Or vetches, bound before the whistling wind  
And winnower's force, so, bounding from the mail  
Of gallant Menelaus, flew afar  
The bitter shaft. Then Menelaus, great  
In battle, smote the hand of Helenus 745  
That held the polished bow; the brazen spear  
Passed through the hand, and reached the bow, and there  
Stood fixed, while Helenus, avoiding death,  
Drew back among his comrades, with his hand  
Held low, and trailing still the ashen stem. 750  
Magnanimous Agenor from the wound  
Drew forth the blade, and wrapped the hand in wool,  
Carefully twisted, taken from a sling  
Carried by an attendant of the chief.  
To meet the glorious Menelaus sprang 755  
Pisander, led by his unhappy fate  
To perish, Menelaus! by thy hand  
In that fierce conflict. When the two were near,  
Advancing toward each other, Atreus' son

Took aim amiss; his spear flew far aside. 760  
Pisander smote the buckler on the arm  
Of mighty Menelaus, yet drave not  
The weapon through. The broad shield stopped its force,  
And broke it at the neck; yet hoped he still  
For victory, and exulted. Then the son 765  
Of Atreus drew his silver-studded sword  
And sprang upon his foe, who from beneath  
His buckler took a brazen battle-axe,  
With a long stem of polished olive-wood.  
Both struck at once. Pisander hewed away, 770  
Below the crest, the plumèd helmet-cone  
Of Atreus' son, who smote, above the nose,  
Pisander's forehead, crashing through the bones.  
Both bleeding eyes dropped to the ground amid  
The dust; he fell; he writhed; the conqueror, 775  
Advancing, set his heel upon his breast,  
And stripped the armor off, and, boasting, said:—  
“Thus shall ye leave unharmed the fleet that brought  
The knights of Greece, ye treaty-breaking sons  
Of Ilium, never satisfied with war! 780  
Yet lack ye not still other guilt and shame,—  
Wrong done to me, ye dogs! Ye have not feared  
The wrath of Hospitable Jove, who flings



The thunder, and will yet destroy your town,  
With all its towers,—ye who, without a cause, 785  
Bore off my youthful bride, and heaps of wealth,  
When she had given you welcome as our guests.  
And now ye seek to burn with fire the fleet  
With which we cross the ocean, and to slay  
The Grecian heroes. Ye shall yet be forced, 790  
Eager for battle as ye are, to pause.  
O Father Jupiter, who hast the praise  
Of highest wisdom among gods and men!  
All this is of thy ordering. How hast thou  
Favored this arrogant crew of Troy, in love 795  
With violence, who never have enough  
Of war and all its many miseries!  
All other things soon satisfy desire,—  
Sleep, love, and song, and graceful dance, which most  
Delight in more than warlike toils,—yet they 800  
Of Troy are never satisfied with war.”

So spake the illustrious man, and, having stripped  
The bloody armor from the dead, he gave  
The spoil to his companions, and rejoined  
The warriors in the van. Harpalion then, 805  
A son of King Pylæmenes, with whom  
He left his home to join the war at Troy,  
Assaulted him. He never saw again

His native land. Close to Atrides' shield,  
He struck it in the centre with his lance, 810  
Yet could not drive the weapon through the brass,  
And backward shrank, in fear of death, among  
His comrades, looking round him lest some foe  
Should wound him with the spear. Meriones  
Let fly a brazen arrow after him, 815  
Which, entering his right flank below the bone,  
Passed through and cleft the bladder. Down he sank  
Where the shaft struck him, breathing out his life  
In the arms of his companions. Like a worm  
He lay extended on the earth ; his blood 820  
Gushed forth, a purple stream, and steeped the soil.  
The large-souled Paphlagonians came around,  
And placed him in a chariot, sorrowing,  
And bore him to the gates of sacred Troy.  
The father followed weeping, but no hand 825  
Was raised to avenge the slaughter of his son.  
Yet deeply moved was Paris at his death,  
For he had been Harpalion's guest among  
The Paphlagonians. Grieving for the slain,  
He sent a brazen arrow from his bow. 830  
Now there was one Euchenor, rich and brave,  
The son of Polyidus, hoary seer ;

His dwelling was in Corinth, and he came,  
Forewarned and conscious of his fate, to Troy;  
For often Polyidus, good old man,  
Warned him that he within his palace halls  
Should perish by a grievous malady,  
Or else be slain by Trojan hands beside  
The Grecian fleet. So, to escape at once  
The censure of the Achaians and disease,  
He came, lest he in after times might rue  
His choice. And now between the jaw and ear  
Did Paris smite him; from the warrior's limbs  
Life fled, and darkness gathered o'er his eyes.

835

840

And then they fought; like a devouring fire  
That battle was; but Hector, dear to Jove,  
Had not yet learned that on the left the Greeks  
Made havoc of his men; for in that hour  
The Greeks had almost made the victory theirs,  
So greatly had the god who shakes the shores  
Kindled their courage, and with his own arm  
Brought timely aid. Still Hector, pressing on  
Where first he leaped within the gates and wall,  
Broke the close phalanxes of shielded Greeks.  
There, ranged beside the hoary deep, the ships  
Of Ajax and Protesilaus lay.

845

850

855

The wall that guarded them was low, and there  
Warriors and steeds in fiercest conflict met;  
There the Bæotians, there in their long robes  
The Iāonians, there the Locrians, there 860  
The men of Phthia, and the Epeians famed  
For valor, held back Hector, struggling on  
To reach the ships, yet found they had no power  
To drive the noble warrior from the ground,  
For he was like a flame. The chosen men 865  
Of Athens formed the van. Menestheus, son  
Of Peteus, was their leader, after whom  
Phidas and Stichius followed, and with them  
The gallant Bias. Meges, Phyleus' son,  
With Dracius and Amphion, marshalled there 870  
The Epeians; while the Phthian band were led  
By Medon and Podarces, warlike chief.  
And Medon was the great Oīleus' son,  
And brother of the lesser Ajax, born  
Without the tie of wedlock, and he dwelt 875  
Far from his native land, in Phylacè;  
For by his violent hand the brother died  
Of Eryopis, whom Oīleus made  
His lawful spouse. Podarces was the son  
Of Iphiclus, and dwelt in Phylacè. 880

These, at the head of Phthia's valiant youth,  
And cased in massive armor, fought beside  
Bœotia's warriors for the Grecian fleet.

But Ajax swift of foot, Oileus' son,  
From him of Telamon departed not 885  
Even for an instant. As when two black steers  
Of equal vigor o'er a fallow draw  
The strongly jointed plough, till near their horns  
Streams the warm sweat; the polished yoke alone  
Holds them asunder, as they move along 890  
The furrow, and the share divides the soil  
That lies between them;—so the heroic twain  
Kept near each other. Many men and brave  
Followed to Troy the son of Telamon  
As his companions, and, when weariness 895  
Came o'er his sweaty limbs, relieved their chief  
Of his broad buckler. But the Locrian host  
Attended not Oileus' great-souled son,  
Nor could they ever venture to engage  
In combat hand to hand. No brazen helms 900  
Were theirs, with horse-hair plumes, no orbèd shields,  
Nor ashen spears. They came with him to Troy,  
Trusting in their good bows, and in their slings  
Of twisted wool, from which they showered afar

Stones that dispersed the phalanxes of Troy. 905  
The chieftains Ajax, warring in the van,  
Clad in their shining armor, fought to check  
The Trojans and their leader, brazen-mailed,  
While in the rear the Locrians lurked unseen,  
And sent their shafts, so that the men of Troy, 910  
All order lost, were fain to cease from fight.

Then had the Trojans from the ships and tents  
Turned back, and fled, with fearful loss of life,  
To lofty Ilium, if Polydamas  
Had not accosted valiant Hector thus:— 915

“Hector, thou hearkenest not to warning words.  
Deem'st thou, because a god has given thee strength  
Beyond all other men for feats of war,  
That therefore thou art wiser than they all  
In council? Think not for thyself to claim 920  
All gifts at once. On one the god bestows  
Prowess in war, upon another grace  
In dance, upon another skill to touch  
The harp and sing. In yet another, Jove  
The Thunderer, implants the prudent mind, 925  
By which the many profit, and by which  
Communities are saved; and well doth he  
Who hath it know its worth. Now let me speak

What seems to me the wisest. Round thee flames  
The encircling war ; the valiant sons of Troy, 930  
Since they have crossed the ramparts, stand aloof,  
Armed as they are, or fight against large odds  
Scattered among the galleys. Yield thou now  
The ground, and, summoning the chiefs, decide  
What plan to follow, — whether we shall storm 935  
The well-oared galleys, should the God vouchsafe  
The victory to us, — or else depart  
In safety from the fleet. I greatly fear  
The Achaians may repay to us the debt  
Of yesterday. There yet is at the fleet 940  
One who, I think, no longer will refrain  
Wholly from battle.” Thus Polydamas  
Spake, and the sage advice pleased Hector well,  
Who, leaping from his chariot to the ground,  
With all his weapons, said these wingèd words: — 945  
“Remain with all the bravest warriors here,  
Polydamas, while I depart to give  
The due commands, and instantly return.”  
He spake, and with a shout he rushed away,  
Seen from afar, like a snow-mountain’s peak, 950  
And flew among the Trojans and allies,  
Who crowded round the brave Polydamas,

The son of Panthöus, at Hector's call.  
Among the foremost combatants he sought  
Deiphobus, and mighty Helenus, 955  
The king; he looked for Adamas, the son  
Of Asius, and for Asius of the house  
Of Hyrtacus. Some not unharmed he found,  
Yet not o'ercome; while others lay in death  
Beneath the galley-sterns, where Grecian hands 960  
Had slain them; others on the wall, struck down  
By missiles, or in combat hand to hand.  
There on the left of that disastrous fray  
He met the noble Alexander, spouse  
Of fair-haired Helen, as he cheered his men, 965  
And rallied them to battle. Hector thus  
Addressed his brother with reproachful words:—  
    "Accursed Paris! noble but in form,  
Effeminate seducer! where are now  
Deiphobus, and mighty Helenus? 970  
And Adamas, the son of Asius, where?  
And Asius, son of Hyrtacus? and where  
Orthryoneus? Now towering Ilium sinks  
From her high summit, and thy fate is sure."  
And then the godlike Paris answered thus:— 975  
    "Since it hath pleased thee, Hector, thus to cast



Reproach on me, though innocent, I may  
 Another day neglect the toils of war,  
 Although in truth my mother brought me forth  
 Not quite unapt for combat. Since the hour 980  
 When thou didst lead the battle to the ships  
 With thy companions, we have held our ground,  
 Here on this spot, contending with the Greeks.  
 Three chiefs for whom thou askest have been slain.  
 Deiphobus and mighty Helenus, 985  
 Both wounded in the hand by massive spears,  
 Have left the field; the son of Saturn saved  
 Their lives. Now lead us wheresoe'er thou wilt,  
 And we will follow thee with resolute hearts,  
 Nor deem that thou wilt find in us a lack 990  
 Of valor while our strength of arm remains.  
 The boldest cannot fight beyond his strength."

With such persuasive words the warrior calmed  
 His brother's anger, and they went where raged  
 The hottest conflict round Cebriones, 995  
 Phalces, Orthæus, and the excellent  
 Polydamas, with Palmys at his side,  
 And Polyphœtes, godlike in his form,  
 And where Ascanius and Morys fought,  
 Sons of Hippotion. They the day before 1000

Came marching from Ascania's fertile fields,  
Moved by the will of Jove to share the war.  
All these swept on, as when a hurricane,  
A thunder-gust, from Father Jupiter  
Buffets the plain, and mingles with the deep, 1005  
In mighty uproar, and the billows rise  
All over the resounding brine, and swell,  
Whitening with foam, and chase each other on.  
So moved the Trojans on, man after man,  
In close array, all armed in glittering brass, 1010  
Following their generals. Hector, Priam's son,  
And peer of Mars in battle, led the van,  
His round shield held before him, tough with hides  
And overlaid with brass. Upon his brow  
The gleaming helmet nodded as he moved. 1015  
On every side he tried the phalanxes,  
If haply they might yield to his assault,  
Made from beneath that buckler; but the Greeks  
In spirit or in order wavered not.  
And Ajax, striding forth, defied him thus:— 1020  
    "Draw nearer, friend! Think'st thou to frighten thus  
The Greeks? We are not quite so inexpert  
In war, although so cruelly chastised  
By Jupiter. Thou thinkest in thy heart

That thou shalt make our ships thy spoil; but we 1025  
Have also our strong arms to drive thee back,  
And far more soon the populous town of Troy,  
Captured and sacked, shall fall by Grecian hands.  
And now I warn thee that the hour is near  
When, fleeing, thou shalt pray to Father Jove 1030  
And all the immortals, that thy long-maned steeds,  
Bearing thee townward 'mid a cloud of dust  
Along the plain, may be more swift than hawks."

As thus he spake, an eagle, to the right,  
High in the middle heaven, flew over him, 1035  
And, gladdened by the omen, all the Greeks  
Shouted; but then illustrious Hector spake:—

"Babbler and boaster, what wild words are these?  
O Ajax! would that I were but as sure  
To be the child of ægis-bearing Jove, 1040  
Brought forth by Juno the august, and held  
In honor everywhere like that which crowns  
Apollo and Minerva, as I know  
That to the Greeks this very day will bring  
Destruction, and that thou shalt also lie 1045  
Slain with the others, if thou dare abide  
The stroke of my long spear, which yet shall tear  
Thy dainty flesh, and thou, with thy full limbs,

*Book XIII.*

45

Shalt be the feast of Trojan dogs and birds,  
Unburied by the galleys of the Greeks."

1830

So Hector spake, and led his warriors on.  
They followed with a mighty shout; the rear  
Sent up as loud a cry. On the other side  
Shouted the Greeks, nor intermitted now  
Their wonted valor, but stood firm to breast  
The onset of the chosen men of Troy.  
The mingled clamor of both hosts went up  
To heaven, and to the shining seat of Jove.

1835

*BOOK XIV.*

THE mighty uproar was not unperceived  
By Nestor's ear, who, sitting at the wine,  
Addressed the son of Æsculapius thus:—

“Noble Machaon, what will happen now?  
Bethink thee: for the clamor grows more loud 5  
From our young warriors at the ships. Stay here  
And drink the purple wine, while for thy limbs  
The fair-haired Hecamede warms the bath  
And washes the dark blood away, and I  
Will climb the watch-tower, and will know the worst.” 10

He spake, and took a buckler, fairly wrought,  
Glittering with brass, and left within the tent  
By Thrasymedes, his own knightly son,  
Who to the war had borne his father's shield;  
He grasped a ponderous spear, with brazen blade, 15  
And stood without the tent, and saw a sight  
Of shame,—the routed Greeks, and close behind  
The haughty Trojans putting them to flight,

And the Greek wall o'erthrown. As when the face  
Of the great deep grows dark with weltering waves,    20  
That silently forebode the swift descent  
Of the shrill blast, the yet uncertain seas  
Roll not to either side, till from the seat  
Of Jupiter comes down the violent wind,—  
So paused the aged chief, uncertain yet               25  
Of purpose,—whether he should join the throng  
Of Greeks, with their swift couriers, or repair  
To sovereign Agamemnon, Atreus' son.  
This to his thought seemed wiser, and he went  
To seek Atrides. Meantime both the hosts               30  
Urged on the work of slaughter; still they fought,  
And still the solid brass upon their limbs  
Rang, smitten with the swords and two-edged spears.  
Then, coming from the fleet, the wounded kings,  
Nurslings of Jove, met Nestor; toward him came       35  
Tydides, and Ulysses, and the son  
Of Atreus, Agamemnon. On the beach  
Of the gray deep their ships were ranged afar  
From that fierce conflict. There the Greeks had drawn,  
To the plain's edge, the first that touched the land,    40  
And built a rampart at their sterns. Though long  
The shore-line, it sufficed not to contain

The galleys, and the host had scanty room;  
Wherefore they drew the galleys up in rows,  
Row behind row, and filled the shore's wide mouth 45  
Between the promontories. There the kings  
Walked, leaning on their lances, to behold  
The tumult and the fight, and inly grieved.  
The sight of aged Nestor startled them,  
And thus the royal Agamemnon spake:— 50

“Neleian Nestor, glory of the Greeks,  
Why hast thou left the murderous fray, and why  
Come hither? Much I fear the fiery chief,  
Hector, will make the menace good which once  
He uttered, speaking to the men of Troy,— 55  
Not to return to Ilium from the fleet  
Till he had burned our ships with fire, and slain  
Us also; thus he spake, and now fulfils  
His menace. O ye gods! the other Greeks,  
And not Achilles only, cherish hate 60  
Against me in their hearts, and now refuse  
To combat even where our galleys lie.”

And Nestor, the Gerenian knight, replied:—  
“Thus is the threat accomplished, nor can Jove  
The Thunderer reverse the event. The wall 65  
In which we trusted as impregnable,

Our fleet's defence and ours, is overthrown;  
But obstinately still the Greeks maintain  
The combat at the ships, nor couldst thou now  
Distinguish with thy sharpest sight where most 70  
The ranks are routed, so confusedly  
They fall, and the wild uproar reaches heaven.  
Meantime consult we what may yet be done,  
If counsel aught avail; yet can I not  
Advise to mingle in the strife again. 75  
It is not meet that wounded men should fight."

And then the royal Agamemnon said:—

"Since at our ships, beneath their very sterns,  
The combat rages; since the wall we built  
Avails not, nor the trench, at which the Greeks 80  
Labored and suffered, hoping it might be  
A sure defence for us and for our fleet,  
Certain it is that to Almighty Jove  
It hath seemed good that here the Greeks, afar  
From Argos, should be shamefully cut off; 85  
For well was I aware when he designed  
To aid the Greeks, and well can I perceive  
That he is honoring now the men of Troy  
Like to the blessed gods, and fettering  
Our valor and our hands. Hear my advice, 90



And follow it. Let us draw down the ships  
Nearest the sea, and launch them on the deep,  
And moor them, anchored, till the lonely night  
Shall come, when, if the Trojans pause from war,  
Haply we may draw down the other barks; 95  
For he who flees from danger, even by night,  
Deserves no blame; and better is his fate  
Who flees from harm than his whom harm o'ertakes."  
Then wise Ulysses, with stern look, replied:—  
"What words, Atrides, have escaped thy lips? 100  
Unhappy man, thou shouldst have held command  
O'er some effeminate army, and not ours,—  
Ours to whom Jupiter, from youth to age,  
Hath granted to accomplish difficult wars,  
Until we pass away. And wouldst thou then 105  
Depart from Troy, the city of broad streets,  
For which we have endured so much and long?  
Nay, be thou silent, lest the other Greeks  
Hear words that never should be said by one  
Who knows to speak with wisdom, and who bears 110  
The sceptre, and who rules so many Greeks  
As thou dost. I contemn with my whole soul  
The counsel thou hast given, commanding us,  
While yet the battle rages, to draw down

Our good ships to the sea, that so the foe  
May see his wish more easily fulfilled,  
Even in the hour of triumph, and our fate  
Be certain ruin; for the Greeks no more  
Will combat when they draw their galleys down,  
But, looking backward to the shore, will leave  
The battle there; and thus, O king of men!  
Will mischief flow from what thou counsellest."

And Agamemnon, king of men, rejoined:—  
"Thou touchest me, Ulysses, to the heart  
With thy harsh censure; yet I did not give  
Command to drag our good ships to the sea,  
Against the will of the Greeks. And would there were  
Some other, young or old, to counsel them  
More prudently, for that would please me well."

Then spake the great in battle, Diomed:—  
"The man is here, nor have ye far to look  
If ye will be persuaded, and refrain  
To blame me angrily, because my years  
Are fewest 'midst you all. I too can boast  
Of noble birth; my father, Tydeus, lies  
Buried beneath a mound of earth at Thebes.  
To Porthus three illustrious sons were born,  
Who dwelt in Pleuron, and in Calydon

The lofty,—Agrius, Melas, and the knight,  
My father's father, Æneus, eminent 140  
Among the rest for valor; he remained  
At home, but, wandering thence, my father went  
To Argos, for the will of Jove was such,—  
Jove and the other gods. He wedded there  
A daughter of Adrastus, and he dwelt 145  
Within a mansion filled with wealth; broad fields  
Fertile in corn were his, and many rows  
Of trees and vines around him; large his flocks,  
And great his fame as one expert to wield,  
Beyond all other Greeks, the spear in war. 150  
This should ye know, for this is true; nor yet  
Contemn my counsel given with careful thought  
And for your good, nor deem it comes from one  
Unwarlike and low-born. Now let us join  
The battle, wounded as we are, for much 155  
It needs our presence, keeping carefully  
Beyond the reach of weapons, to avoid  
Wound upon wound, and, cheering on the rest,  
Send back into the combat those who stand  
Apart, indulgent to their weariness." 160

He spake: they hearkened, and with hasty steps  
Went on, King Agamemnon at their head.

Nor was the glorious power that shakes the earth  
Unmindful of his charge. He went among  
The warriors in the semblance of a man 165  
Stricken in years, and, seizing the right hand  
Of Agamemnon, spake these wingèd words:—

“O son of Atreus, the revengeful heart  
Of Peleus’ son must leap within his breast  
For joy, to see the slaughter and the rout 170  
Of the Achaians, since with him there dwells  
No touch of pity. May he perish too,  
Like us, and may some god o’erwhelm his name  
With infamy. With thee the blessed gods  
Are not so far incensed, and thou shalt see 175  
The Trojan chiefs and princes of their host  
Raising the dust-clouds on the spacious plain  
In fleeing from our ships and tents to Troy.”

He spake, and, shouting, strode across the field.  
As loud a cry as from nine thousand men, 180  
Or from ten thousand hurrying to engage  
In battle, such the cry that ocean’s king  
Uttered from his deep lungs. It woke anew  
Invincible resolve in every heart  
Among the Greeks to combat to the end. 185

Now, Juno of the golden throne beheld

As, standing on the Olympian height, she cast  
Downward her eyes to where her brother moved,  
Bearing his part with glory in the fray;  
And inly she rejoiced. She also saw 190  
Jove on the peak of Ida, down whose side  
Glide many brooks, and greatly was displeased.  
Then the majestic goddess with large eyes  
Mused how to occupy the mind of him  
Who bears the ægis. This at length seemed best: 195  
To deck herself in fair array, and haste  
To Ida, that the God might haply yield  
To amorous desire, and in that hour  
Her hand might pour into his lids, and o'er  
His watchful mind, a soft and pleasant sleep. 200  
She went to her own chamber, which her son  
Vulcan had framed, with massive portals made  
Fast to the lintels by a secret bolt,  
Which none but she could draw. She entered in  
And closed the shining doors; and first she took 205  
Ambrosial water, washing every stain  
From her fair limbs, and smoothed them with rich oil,  
Ambrosial, soft, and fragrant, which, when touched  
Within Jove's brazen halls, perfumed the air  
Of earth and heaven. When thus her shapely form 210

Had been anointed, and her hands had combed  
Her tresses, she arranged the lustrous curls,  
Ambrosial, beautiful, that clustering hung  
Round her immortal brow. And next she threw  
Around her an ambrosial robe, the work 215  
Of Pallas, all its web embroidered o'er  
With forms of rare device. She fastened it  
Over the breast with clasps of gold, and then  
She passed about her waist a zone which bore  
Fringes an hundred-fold, and in her ears 220  
She hung her three-gemmed ear-rings, from whose gleam  
She won an added grace. Around her head  
The glorious goddess drew a flowing veil,  
Just from the loom, and shining like the sun;  
And, last, beneath her bright white feet she bound 225  
The shapely sandals. Gloriously arrayed  
In all her ornaments, she left her bower,  
And calling Venus to herself, apart  
From all the other gods, addressed her thus:—  
“Wilt thou, dear child, comply with what I ask? 230  
Or, angered that I aid the Greeks, while thou  
Dost favor Troy, wilt thou deny my suit?”  
And thus Jove's daughter, Venus, made reply:—  
“O Juno, whom I reverence, speak thy thought,

Daughter of mighty Saturn! for my heart 235  
Commands me to obey thy wish in all  
That I can do, and all that can be done."

And thus imperial Juno, planning guile,  
Rejoined: "Give me the charm and the desire  
With which thou overcomest gods and men. 240  
I go to the far end of this green earth,  
To visit Ocean, father of the gods,  
And Mother Tethys, who, receiving me  
From Rhea, cherished me, and brought me up  
In their abodes, when Jove the Thunderer 245  
Cast Saturn down to lie beneath the earth  
And barren sea. I go to visit them,  
And end their hateful quarrel. For too long  
Have they been strangers to the marriage-bed.  
But if my words persuade them, and bring back 250  
Their hearts to their old love, my name will be  
Honored by them, and dear throughout all time."

And laughter-loving Venus answered thus:—  
"What thou desirest should not be denied,  
And shall not, for thou sleepest in the arms 255  
Of Jupiter, the mightiest of the gods."

She spake, and from her bosom drew the zone,  
Embroidered, many colored, and instinct

With every winning charm — with love, desire,  
Dalliance, and gentle speech — that stealthily 260  
O'ercomes the purpose of the wisest mind,  
And, placing it in Juno's hands, she said: —

“This many-colored zone, and all that dwells  
Within it, take, and in thy bosom hide,  
And thou, I deem, wilt not return and leave. 265  
Thy purpose unfulfilled.” As thus she spake,  
The large-eyed stately Juno smiled and took,  
And, smiling, in her bosom placed the zone,  
While Venus, daughter of the Thunderer,  
Went to the palace. Juno took her way 270  
From high Olympus o'er Pieria's realm  
And rich Emathia, o'er equestrian Thrace,  
With snowy peaks exceeding high; her feet  
Touched not the ground. From Athos suddenly  
She stooped upon the tossing deep, and came 275  
To Lemnos, seat of Thoas the divine,  
And there she met Death's brother, Sleep, and took  
His hand in hers, and thus accosted him: —

“O Sleep, whose sway is over all the gods  
And all mankind, if ever thou didst heed 280  
My supplication, hearken to me now,  
And I shall be forever grateful. Close



The glorious eyes of Jove beneath his lids  
Midst our embracings, and for thy reward  
Thou shalt possess a sumptuous throne of gold 285  
Imperishable. Vulcan, my lame son,  
Shall forge it for thee, and adorn its sides,  
And place below a footstool, upon which  
Thy shining feet shall rest in banqueting."

Then gentle Sleep made answer, speaking thus:— 290  
"Great Saturn's daughter, Juno the august,  
On any other of the deathless gods  
Could I bring slumber,—even on the tides  
Of the swift Ocean, parent of them all;  
Yet may I not approach Saturnian Jove 295  
If he command me not. Already once  
He made me quail with fright before his threats,  
When his magnanimous son, Alcides, sailed  
From Troy, which he had ravaged. Then I lulled  
The senses of the Ægis-bearer, Jove, 300  
Wrapping myself around him, while thy mind  
Was planning mischiefs for his son, and thou  
Didst wake the blasts of all the bitter winds  
To sweep the ocean, and to bear away  
The hero on its billows from his friends 305  
To populous Cos. When Jupiter awoke

His anger rose; he seized and flung the gods  
Hither and thither; me he chiefly sought,  
And would have cast me to destruction, down  
From the great heavens into the deep, if Night, 320  
Whose power o'ercomes the might of gods and men,  
Had not preserved me, fleeing to her shade.  
So Jove refrained, indignant as he was,  
For much he feared to offend the swift-paced Night.  
And now thou bid'st me tempt my fate again." 325

Imperial, large-eyed Juno thus rejoined: —  
"Why rise such thoughts, O Sleep, within thy heart?  
Deem'st thou that Jove the Thunderer favors Troy  
As much as he was angered for the sake  
Of Hercules, his son? Do what I ask, 330  
And thou shalt have from me a wedded spouse.  
One of the younger Graces shall be thine, —  
Pasithea, whom thou hast desired so long."

She spake, and Sleep, delighted, answered thus: —  
"Swear now to me, O goddess, by the Styx, 335  
The inviolable river. Lay one hand  
Upon the food-producing earth, and place  
The other on the glimmering sea, that all  
The gods below, round Saturn, may attest  
Thy promise, — that thou wilt bestow on me 340

One of the younger Graces for my bride,—  
Pasithea, whom I have desired so long.”

He spake, and white-armed Juno willingly  
Complied ; she took the oath, and called on all  
The gods who dwell in Tartarus below, 335  
And bear the name of Titans. When the oath  
Was taken, and the accustomed rites performed,  
From Lemnos and from Imbrus forth they went,  
Shrouded in mist ; and swiftly moving on  
Toward Ida, seamed with rivulets and nurse 340  
Of savage beasts, they came to Lectos first,  
And there they left the sea. Their way was now  
Over the land, and underneath their feet  
The forest summits shook. Sleep halted there  
Ere yet the eye of Jupiter descried 345  
His coming, and upon a lofty fir,  
The tallest growing on the Idæan mount,  
High in the air among the clouds of heaven,  
Springing from earth, he took his perch within  
The screen of branches, like the shrill-voiced bird, 350  
Called Chalcis by the immortals, and by men  
Cymindis, haunting the high mountain-side.

And Juno hastened on to Gargarus,  
The peak of lofty Ida. Jupiter

The Cloud-compeller, saw her, and at once 355  
Love took possession of his mighty heart,  
As when they first were wedded, and withdrew  
From their dear parents' sight. The God drew near  
And stood before her, and addressed her thus:—

“Why art thou hastening from Olympus thus, 360  
And whither; yet without thy steeds and car?”

And Juno answered with dissembled guile:—  
“To the far ends of the green earth I go,  
To visit Ocean, father of the gods,  
And Mother Tethys, in whose palace halls 365  
They nourished me, and brought me up. I go  
To end their hateful quarrels, for too long  
Have they been strangers to the marriage-bed,  
Incensed against each other. Now my steeds,  
Waiting to bear me over land and sea, 370  
Stand at the foot of Ida seamed with rills,  
And now I come to thee, lest thou perchance  
Be wroth if I unknown to thee repair  
To where old Ocean dwells amid his deeps.”

The Cloud-compeller, Jupiter, rejoined:— 375  
“Hereafter, Juno, there will be a time  
For such a journey; meantime let us give  
This hour to rest and dalliance. Never yet

Did love of goddess or of mortal maid  
 Possess and overcome my heart as now ; 380  
 Not even when I loved Ixion's dame,  
 Who bore Pirithoüs, prudent as a god  
 Among the counsellors; nor when I loved  
 Acrisius' daughter with the dainty feet,  
 Danaë, who brought forth Perseus, eminent 385  
 Above the other warrior-chiefs; nor when  
 I carried off from Phoenix the renowned  
 His daughter, who bore Minos afterward,  
 And Rhadamanthus. Never so I loved  
 Semele, nor Alcmena who in Thebes 390  
 Brought forth to me the great-souled Hercules,  
 My valiant son, while Bacchus, the delight  
 Of men, was born of Semele; nor yet  
 So loved I Ceres, fair-haired queen, nor yet  
 Latona, gloriously beautiful, 395  
 Nor even thee, as now I love, and yield  
 My spirit to the sweetness of desire."

Imperial Juno artfully replied:—  
 "Importunate Saturnius, what is this  
 That thou hast said? If on this summit height 400  
 Of Ida we recline, where all around  
 Is open to the sight, how will it be

Should any of the ever-living gods  
Behold us sleeping, and to all the rest  
Declare it? I could never, rising thence, 405  
Enter again thy palace, save with shame.  
Yet if thou truly speakest thy desire,  
Thou hast a marriage-chamber of thine own,  
Which Vulcan, thy beloved son, for thee  
Framed, fitting to its posts the solid doors; 410  
And thither let us go to take our rest  
Within it, since thou hast declared thy will."

Then spake again the Cloud-compeller Jove:—  
"O Juno! fear thou not that any god  
Or man will look upon us. I shall throw 415  
A golden cloud around us, which the Sun  
Himself cannot look through, although his eye  
Is piercing, far beyond all other eyes."

The son of Saturn spake, and took his wife  
Into his arms, while underneath the pair 420  
The sacred Earth threw up her freshest herbs,—  
The dewy lotus, and the crocus-flower,  
And thick and soft the hyacinth. All these  
Upbore them from the ground. Upon this couch  
They lay, while o'er them a bright golden cloud 425  
Gathered, and shed its drops of glistening dew.

So slumbered on the heights of Gargarus  
The All-Father, overcome by sleep and love,  
And held his consort in his arms. Meanwhile  
The gentle Sleep made haste to seek the fleet 430  
Of Greece. He bore a message to the god  
Neptune, who shakes the shores, and, drawing near,  
He thus accosted him with wingèd words:—

“Now, Neptune, give the Greeks thy earnest aid,  
And though it be but for a little space, 435  
While Jupiter yet slumbers, let them win  
The glory of the day; for I have wrapt  
His senses in a gentle lethargy,  
To which he is betrayed by Juno’s wiles.”

He spake, and took his way, departing thence 440  
Among the tribes of men. These words inflamed  
The god’s desire to aid the Greeks; he sprang  
Far on among the foremost, and exclaimed:—

“O Greeks! do ye again submit to yield  
The victory to Hector, Priam’s son, 445  
That he may seize our fleet and bear away  
The glory of the day? This is his hope,  
And this his boast, since now Achilles lies  
Inactive at his ships, in sullen wrath.  
Yet little should we need him, if the rest 450

Stood bravely by each other. Hear me now,  
And do what I advise. Let all of us,  
The best and bravest, bearing shields, and capped  
With glittering helms, and wielding in our hands  
The longest spears, advance, and I will lead 455  
The charge; nor do I think that Hector, son  
Of Priam, daring as he seems, will yet  
Abide our onset. Whoso has the heart  
To make a stand with me, and yet who bears  
A narrow shield, let it be given to one 460  
Less warlike, and a broader shield be found."

He spake; they hearkened and obeyed. The kings  
Tydides, and Ulysses, and the son  
Of Atreus, Agamemnon, though their wounds  
Still galled them, marshalled and reviewed the ranks, 465  
And changed their arms; they made the braver wear  
The better armor, and the worse they gave  
To the less warlike. Now, when o'er their breasts  
The burnished mail was girded, they began  
Their march; the great earth-shaker, Neptune, led 470  
The onset, grasping in his sinewy hand  
A sword of fearful length and flashing blade,  
Like lightning. No man dared encounter it  
In combat; every arm was stayed by fear.



Right opposite, illustrious Hector ranged 475  
His Trojans. Dark-haired Neptune and the son  
Of Priam now engaged in desperate strife,  
One on the side of Troy, and one for Greece.  
The sea swelled upward toward the Grecian tents  
And fleet, while both the armies flung themselves 480  
Against each other with a loud uproar.  
Not with such noise the ocean-billows lash  
The mainland, when the violent north wind  
Tumbles them shoreward; not with such a noise  
Roar the fierce flames within the mountain glen, 485  
When leaping upward to consume the trees;  
And not so loudly howls the hurricane  
Among the lofty branches of the oaks  
When in its greatest fury, as now rose  
The din of battle from the hosts that rushed 490  
Against each other with terrific cries.

At Ajax glorious Hector cast his spear,  
As face to face they stood. It missed him not,  
But struck him where two belts upon his breast  
O'erlapped each other, — that which held the shield 495  
And that which bore the silver-studded sword.  
These saved the tender muscles. Hector, vexed  
That thus his weapon should have flown in vain,

Retreated toward his comrades, shunning death.  
As he drew back, the Telamonian hurled 500  
A stone,—for stones in multitude, that propped  
The galleys, lay around, and rolled among  
The feet of those who struggled. One of these  
He lifted, smiting Hector on the breast,  
Above the buckler's orb and near the neck. 505  
He sent it spinning like a top; it fell  
And whirled along the ground. As when beneath  
The stroke of Father Jupiter an oak  
Falls broken at the root, and from it fumes  
A stifling smell of sulphur, and the heart 510  
Of him who stands and sees it sinks with dread,—  
For fearful is the bolt of mighty Jove,—  
So dropped the valiant Hector to the earth  
Amid the dust; his hand let fall the spear;  
His shield and helm fell with him, and his mail 515  
Of shining brass clashed round him. Then the Greeks  
Rushed toward him, yelling fiercely, for they hoped  
To drag him thence; and many a lance they cast;  
But none by javelin or by thrust could wound  
The shepherd of the people, for there came 520  
Around him all the bravest of his host,—  
Polydamas, Æneas, and the great

Agenor, and Sarpedon, he who led  
The Lycian bands, and Glaucus the renowned;  
These flung themselves into the strife, while none 525  
Of all the rest refrained, but firmly held  
Their broad round shields before him. Then his friends  
Lifted him in their arms, and bore him off,  
Out of the conflict, to his fiery steeds  
That waited for him in the battle's rear, 530  
With charioteer and sumptuous car; and these  
Bore him to Ilium, sorely suffering.

But when they now had reached the crossing-place  
Of Xanthus, full of eddies, pleasant stream,  
The progeny of ever-living Jove, 535  
They lifted out the hero from the car,  
And laid him on the ground, and on him poured  
Water, at which his breath and sight returned.  
He sat upon his knees, and from his throat  
Gave forth the purple blood, and then he fell 540  
Back to the ground, and darkness veiled his eyes,  
For still his senses felt the stunning blow.

The Greeks saw Hector leave the field, and pressed  
The foe more hotly, and bethought themselves  
Of their old valor. Then the swift of foot, 545  
Oïlean Ajax, darted to the van,

And with his fir-tree spear smote Satnius, son  
Of Enops, whom a Naiad eminent  
For beauty among all the nymphs brought forth  
To Enops, when on Satnio's banks he kept 550  
His flocks. Oileus' son, expert to wield  
The spear, drew near, and pierced him in the flank.  
Prostrate he fell, and suddenly the Greeks  
And Trojans gathered round in desperate fray.  
Polydamas, the mighty spearman, son 555  
Of Panthoüs, coming to avenge him, smote  
On the right shoulder Prothoënor, son  
Of Areïlochus. The pitiless spear  
Passed through, and falling in the dust he grasped  
The earth with dying hands. Polydamas 560  
Shouted aloud, exulting over him: —

“Not vainly, as I think, hath flown the spear  
From the strong hand of the magnanimous son  
Of Panthoüs. Some Achaian hath received  
The weapon in his side, to lean upon 565  
In going down to Pluto's dim abode.”

He spake; the Achaians chafed to hear his boast,  
And most the warlike son of Telamon;  
For the slain Greek fell near him. Instantly,  
Just as the Trojan moved away, he hurled 570  
His shining lance. Polydamas, to escape

The death-stroke, sprang aside. Archilochus,  
Antenor's son, received the blow : the gods  
Had doomed him to be slain. It pierced the spine  
Where the head joins the neck, and severed there 575  
The tendons on each side. His head and mouth  
And nostrils struck the ground before his knees.

And thus to excellent Polydamas  
Did Ajax shout in turn : "Bethink thee now,  
And tell me truly, was not this a man 580  
Worthy to die for Prothoënor's sake?  
No man of mean repute or meanly born  
He seems, but either brother to the knight  
Antenor, or his son ; for certainly  
His looks declare him of Antenor's race." 585

He spake ; but well he knew the slain. Meanwhile  
The Trojans heard and grieved. Then Acamas,  
Stalking around his fallen brother, slew  
Promachus, the Bæotian, with his spear,  
While dragging off the dead man by the feet. 590

Then o'er the fallen warrior, Acamas  
Boasted aloud : "O measureless in threats!  
Bowmen of Argos! not to us alone  
Shall woe and mourning come; ye also yet  
Will perish. See your Promachus o'erthrown, 595  
And by my spear, that so my brother's death

May not be unrequited. Every man  
Should wish a brother left to avenge his fall."

He ended, and the Greeks were vexed to hear  
His boast; the brave Peneleus most of all 600  
Was angered, and he rushed on Acamas,  
Who waited not the onset of the king,  
And in his stead was Ilioneus slain,  
The son of Phorbas, who was rich in flocks,  
Whom Mercury, of all the sons of Troy, 605  
Loved most, and gave him ample wealth; his wife  
Brought Ilioneus forth, and only him;  
And him Peneleus smote beneath the brow,  
In the eye's socket, forcing out the ball;  
The spear passed through, and reappeared behind. 610  
Down sat the wounded man with arms outstretched,  
While, drawing his sharp sword, Peneleus smote  
The middle of his neck, and lopped away  
The helmèd head, which fell upon the ground,  
The spear still in the eye. He lifted it 615  
As one would lift a poppy up, and thus  
He shouted, boasting, to the Trojan host:—  
"Go now, ye Trojans, and inform from me  
The father and the mother of the slain  
That they may mourn within their palace walls 620  
Illustrious Ilioneus. After this

Shall the sad wife of Promachus, the son  
Of Alegenor, never hasten forth  
To meet her husband with glad looks, when we  
The Greeks return from Ilium with our fleet." 625

He spake; the Trojans all grew pale with fear,  
And gazed around for an escape from death.

Say, Muses, ye who on the Olympian height  
Inhabit, who was first among the Greeks  
To gather bloody spoil, when now the power 630  
That shakes the shores had turned the tide of war.

First, Ajax, son of Telamon, struck down  
Hyrtius, the leader of the Mysian band,  
And son of Gyrtias, while Antilochus  
Spoiled Mermerus and Phalces. Morys next, 635  
Slain by the weapon of Meriones,  
Fell with Hippotion. Teucer overthrew  
Prothoüs and Periphœtes. Atreus' son  
Smote Hyperenor, prince among his tribe,  
Upon the flank; the trenchant weapon drank 640  
The entrails, and the soul, driven forth, escaped  
Through the deep wound, and darkness veiled his eyes.  
But Ajax swift of foot, Oileus' son,  
O'erthrew the most, for none could equal him  
In swift pursuit when Jove ordained a flight. 645

*BOOK XV.*

**N**OW when the Trojans in their flight had crossed  
Rampart and trench, and many had been slain  
By the pursuing Greeks, they made a halt  
Beside their chariots, in despair and pale  
With terror. Meanwhile Jupiter awoke, 5  
On Ida's height, from slumber by the side  
Of Juno, goddess of the golden throne.  
At once he rose and saw the Trojan host  
Routed, and, following close upon their flight,  
The Argive warriors putting them to rout, 10  
Aided by Neptune, sovereign of the sea,  
And Hector lying on the field among  
His fellow-warriors, breathing painfully,  
Vomiting blood, and senseless, for the arm  
That smote was not the feeblest of the Greeks. 15  
The Father of immortals and of men  
Beheld and pitied him, and terribly  
Frowned upon Juno, and bespoke her thus:—



“O evil-minded Juno, full of guile!  
Thy arts have made the noble Hector leave 20  
The combat, and have forced his troops to flee.  
I know not whether ’twere not well that thou  
Shouldst taste the fruit of thy pernicious wiles,  
Chastised by me with stripes. Dost thou forget  
When thou didst swing suspended, and I tied 25  
Two anvils to thy feet, and bound a chain  
Of gold that none could break around thy wrists?  
Then didst thou hang in air amid the clouds,  
And all the gods of high Olympus saw  
With pity. They stood near, but none of them 30  
Were able to release thee. Whoso came  
Within my reach I seized, and hurled him o’er  
Heaven’s threshold, and he fell upon the earth  
Scarce breathing. Yet the passion of my wrath,  
Caused by the wrongs of godlike Hercules, 35  
Was not to be so calmed; for craftily  
Hadst thou called up the violent northern blast,  
To chase him far across the barren deep,  
And drive him from his course to populous Cos.  
I rescued him at length, and brought him back 40  
To Argos famed for steeds, though after long  
And many hardships. I remind thee now  
Of this, that thou mayst see of what avail

Hereafter thy dissembled love and all  
Thy cunning strategies will be to thee."

45

He spake, and Juno, large-eyed and august,  
Shuddered, and answered Jove with wingèd words:—

"Be witness, Earth, and the great Heavens above,  
And waters of the Styx that glide beneath,—  
That dreadful oath which most the blessed gods  
Revere,—be witness, too, that sacred head  
Of thine, and our own nuptial couch, by which  
I would not rashly swear at any time,

50

That not by my persuasion Neptune went—

The shaker of the shores—to harass Troy

55

And Hector, and to aid the cause of Greece.

He went self-counselled; he had seen the Greeks

Pressed grievously beside their fleet, and took

Compassion on them. Yet would I advise

That he obey thy word, and take his place

60

Where thou, the Cloud-compeller, bid'st him go."

She ended, and the Father of the gods

And mortals smiled, and said, in wingèd words:—

"Large-eyed, imperial Juno, wouldst thou sit

In council with the immortals, and assist

65

My purposes, then Neptune, though at heart

He were averse, would yet conform his will

To mine and thine. If thou dost truly speak,  
And from thy heart, go now to where the gods  
Assemble, summon Iris, and with her 70  
The archer-god Apollo. Give in charge  
To Iris that she hasten to the host  
Of the mailed Greeks, and bid king Neptune leave  
The battle for his palace. Let the god  
Phœbus, preparing Hector for the fight, 75  
Breathe strength into his frame, that so he lose  
The sense of pain which bows his spirit now,  
And he shall force the Greeks again to flee  
In craven fear. Then shall their flying host  
Fall back upon the galleys of the son 80  
Of Peleus, who shall send into the fight  
His friend Patroclus. Him the mighty spear  
Of Hector shall o'erthrow before the walls  
Of Ilium, after many a Trojan youth  
Shall by his hand have fallen, and with them 85  
My noble son, Sarpedon. Roused to rage,  
Then shall the great Achilles take the life  
Of Hector. Be it from this time my care  
That all the assaults of Trojans in the fleet  
Be beaten back, till by Minerva's aid 90  
The Greeks possess the lofty town of Troy.

Still am I angry, nor will I allow  
One of the ever-living gods to aid  
The Greeks, until the prayer of Peleus' son  
Shall fully be accomplished, as my word 95  
And nod were given, when Thetis clasped my knees,  
Entreating me to honor, signally,  
Her son, Achilles, spoiler of walled towns."

He spake; the white-armed goddess willingly  
Obeyed him, and from Ida's summit flew 100  
To high Olympus. As the thought of man  
Flies rapidly, when, having travelled far,  
He thinks, "Here would I be, I would be there,"  
And flits from place to place, so swiftly flew  
Imperial Juno to the Olympian mount, 105  
And there she found the ever-living gods  
Assembled in the halls of Jupiter.

These, as they saw her, starting from their seats,  
Reached forth their cups to greet her. All the rest  
She overlooked, and took the beaker held 110  
By blooming Themis, who in haste had run  
To meet her, and in wingèd accents said: —

"Why comest thou, O Juno! with the look  
Of one o'ercome with fear. Hath Saturn's son,  
Thy lord, disquieted thy soul with threats?" 115

The white-armed goddess Juno answered her:—  
“Ask me not, heavenly Themis,—thou dost know  
The cruel, arrogant temper that is his,—  
But sit presiding at the common feast,  
In this fair palace of the gods, and thou  
And all in heaven shall hear what evils Jove  
Has threatened. All, I think, will not rejoice  
To hear the tidings, be they gods or men,  
Though some contentedly are feasting now.”

120

Thus having said, imperial Juno took  
Her place, and all the gods within the halls  
Of Jupiter were grieved. The goddess smiled,  
But only with the lips; her forehead wore  
Above the jetty brows no sign of joy,  
While thus she spake in anger to the rest:—

125

130

“Vainly, and in our madness, do we strive  
With Father Jove. We come and seek by craft  
Or force to move his stubborn will; he sits  
Apart, unyielding, unregarding, proud  
Of the vast strength and power in which he stands  
Above all other of the deathless gods.  
Bear therefore patiently whatever ill  
He sends to each. Already, as I learn,  
Hath Mars his share of sorrow. In the war

135

Ascalaphus hath perished, whom he loved!  
Dearly, beyond all other men, and whom  
The fiery god acknowledged as his son."

140

As thus she spake, Mars smote his sinewy thighs  
With his dropped hands, and sorrowfully said: —

"Be not offended with me, ye who make  
Your dwelling on Olympus, if I go  
Down to the Achaian fleet, and there avenge  
The slaughter of my son, though I be doomed  
To fall before the thunderbolt of Jove,  
And lie in blood and dust among the dead."

145

150

He spake, and summoned Fear and Flight to yoke  
His steeds, and put his glorious armor on.  
Then greater and more terrible had been  
The avenging wrath of Jupiter inflamed  
Against the gods, if Pallas in her fear  
For all the heavenly dwellers had not left  
Her throne, and, rushing through the portals, snatched  
The helmet from his head, and from his arm  
The shield, and from his brawny hand the spear,  
And laid the brazen weapon by, and thus  
Rebuked the fiery temper of the god: —

155

160

"Thou madman, thou art frantic, thou art lost!  
Hast thou not ears to hear, nor any shame

Nor reason left? Hast thou not heard the words  
Of white-armed Juno, who so lately left 165  
Olympian Jupiter? Wouldst thou return  
In pain and sorrow to the Olympian heights,  
Driven back ingloriously, and made the cause  
Of many miseries to all the gods?—  
For Jove would leave the Trojans and their foes, 170  
The gallant Greeks, and turn on us, and bring  
Ruin upon Olympus. He would seize  
Guilty and guiltless in his rage alike.  
Wherefore I counsel thee to lay aside  
Resentment for the slaughter of thy son, 175  
Since braver men and stronger have been slain,  
And will be slain hereafter. Vain it were  
To seek from death to save the race of man.”  
She said, and, leading back the fiery Mars,  
Seated him on his throne, while Juno called 180  
Apollo forth, with Iris, messenger  
Of heaven, and thus in wingèd accents spake:—  
“Jove calls you both to Ida. When ye reach  
Its heights, and look upon his countenance,  
Receive his sovereign mandate and obey.” 185  
So spake imperial Juno, and withdrew  
And took her seat again, while they in haste

Flew toward the mount of Ida, seamed with rills  
And nurse of savage beasts. Upon the top  
Of Gargarus they found the Thunderer, 190  
The son of Saturn, sitting. In a cloud  
Of fragrant haze he sat concealed; the twain  
Entered and stood before the God of Storms,  
Who saw them not displeased, so speedily  
Had they obeyed his consort. First he turned 195  
To Iris, and in wingèd accents said:—

“Haste thee, swift Iris, and report my words  
To royal Neptune, and report them right.  
Bid him, withdrawing from the battle-field,  
Repair to the assembly of the gods, 200  
Or the great ocean. If he disobey,  
Contemning my command, then bid him think  
Maturely, whether, mighty though he be,  
He can withstand when I put forth my power  
Against him. Greater is my strength than his, 205  
And elder-born am I. Yet in his pride  
Of heart he dares to call himself my peer,  
Though all the others look on me with awe.”

Thus spake the god, and Iris, whose swift feet  
Are like the wind, obeyed, and downward plunged 210  
From Ida's height to sacred Troy. As when



Snow-flakes or icy hail are dropped to earth  
From clouds before the north wind when it sweeps  
The sky, so darted Iris to the ground,  
And stood by mighty Neptune's side, and said:— 215

“O dark-haired shaker of the shores, I bring  
A message from the Ægis-bearer, Jove,  
That thou, withdrawing from the battle-field,  
Repair to the assembly of the gods,  
Or the great ocean. If thou disobey, 220  
Contemning his command, then hear his threat:  
He will come hither and put forth his power  
Against thee, and he warns thee not to tempt  
The strife; for greater is his power than thine,  
And he is elder-born, though in thy pride 225  
Of heart thou dost declare thyself the peer  
Of him whom all the rest regard with awe.”

Illustrious Neptune answered with disdain:—  
“In truth an arrogant speech; he seeks by force  
To bar me from my purpose, who can claim 230  
Rights equal to his own, though great his power.  
We are three brothers,—Rhea brought us forth,—  
The sons of Saturn,—Jupiter, and I,  
And Pluto, regent of the realm below.  
Three parts were made of all existing things, 235

And each of us received his heritage.  
The lots were shaken; and to me it fell  
To dwell forever in the hoary deep,  
And Pluto took the gloomy realm of night,  
And, lastly, Jupiter the ample heaven 240  
And air and clouds. Yet doth the earth remain,  
With high Olympus, common to us all.  
Therefore I yield me not to do his will,  
Great as he is; and let him be content  
With his third part. He cannot frighten me 245  
With gestures of his arm. Let him insult  
With menaces the daughters and the sons  
Of his own loves, and give them law, since they  
Perforce must hear, and patiently submit."

Then the fleet-footed Iris spake again:— 250  
"O dark-haired Neptune, shall I bear from thee  
This harsh, defiant answer back to Jove,  
Or shall it yet be changed? The prudent mind  
Yields to the occasion, and thou knowest well  
The Furies wait upon the elder-born." 255

Then spake in turn the god who shakes the shores:—  
"O goddess Iris, thou hast wisely said.  
An excellent thing it is when messengers  
Know how to counsel well. But in my heart  
And soul a wrathful sense of injury 260

Arises when he chides with insolent words  
Me, who was equal with him in my lot,  
And born to equal destinies. Yet now,  
Although offended, I give way; but this  
I tell thee, and 't is from my heart,—if he, 265  
In spite of me and Pallas, spoiler-queen,  
And Juno, Mercury, and Vulcan, spare  
The towers of Troy,—if he refuse to bring  
Ruin on her, and glory on the Greeks,  
Then let him know that hatred without end 270  
Or intermission is between us two.”

As thus he spake, the shaker of the shores  
Quitted the Grecian army, took his way  
Seaward, and plunged into the deep. The host  
Perceived their loss. Then Cloud-compelling Jove 275  
Turned to Apollo and addressed him thus:—

“Now go at once to Hector, mailed in brass,  
Belovèd Phœbus, for the god who shakes  
The earth, departing to the ocean-deeps,  
Avoids our wrath; else had the other gods, 280  
Even they who far beneath the earth surround  
Old Saturn, heard our quarrel. Well it is  
For both of us that he, although enraged,  
Braved not my arm, for otherwise the strife

Had not been ended without sweat. Now take 285  
The fringed ægis in thy hands, and shake  
Its orb before the warrior Greeks, to fill  
Their hearts with fear. I give, O archer-god,  
Illustrious Hector to thy charge. Revive  
The might that dwelt within him, till the Greeks 290  
Reach, in their flight, the fleet and Hellespont;  
Then shall it be my care, by word and deed,  
To give them rest and respite from their toils."

He spake: Apollo hearkened and obeyed  
His father, darting down from Ida's height 295  
Like the fleet falcon, chaser of the dove,  
And swiftest of the race of birds. He found  
Hector, the warlike Priam's noble son,  
No longer on his bed. He sat upright;  
The life was coming back; he knew again 300  
His friends; the heavy breathing ceased; the sweat  
Was stanch'd; the will of ægis-bearing Jove  
Reviv'd the warrior's strength. The archer-god,  
Phœbus, approached, and, standing by him, said:—

"Why, Hector, son of Priam, dost thou sit 305  
Languishing thus, apart from all the host?  
Has aught of evil overtaken thee?"

And then the crested Hector feebly said:—

“Who may'st thou be, O kindest of the gods,  
That thus dost question me? Hast thou not heard 310  
That the great warrior Ajax, with a stone,  
Smote me upon the breast, and made me leave  
The battle-field, where I o'ertook and slew  
His comrades by the galleys of the Greeks?  
I thought to be this day among the dead 315  
In Pluto's mansion; even now it seemed  
That I was breathing my dear life away.”

Then spake again Apollo, archer-god:—  
“Take courage, for the son of Saturn sends 320  
From Ida's summit one who will attend  
And aid thee,—Phœbus of the golden sword,  
Long practised to defend thy Troy and thee.  
Rise now, encouraging thy numerous host  
Of charioteers to press with their swift steeds  
Straight toward the roomy galleys of the Greeks. 325  
I go before to smooth for them the way,  
And turn the Achaian bands, and make them flee.”

He spake, and into the great ruler's breast  
Breathed strength and courage. As a stabled horse,  
Fed at his crib with barley, breaks the thong 330  
That fastened him, and, issuing, scours the plain  
Where he was wont in some smooth-flowing stream

To bathe his sides,—he holds his head aloft  
Proudly, and o'er his shoulders streams the mane,—  
Consciously beautiful, he darts away 335  
On nimble knees, that bear him to the fields  
He knows so well, and pastures of the mares;—  
So after he had hearkened to the god  
Moved the swift feet of Hector, and he flew  
To cheer his horsemen on. As peasant men 340  
Rush with their dogs in chase of hornèd stag  
Or mountain goat, whose refuge is among  
Thickets and lofty rocks, nor can they take  
Their prey, for at their clamor there appears  
A manèd lion in the way, and turns 345  
The chasers back, although in hot pursuit,—  
Thus did the Greeks embattled close pursue  
The men of Ilium, striking with their swords  
And two-edged spears; but when at length they saw  
Hector among the ranks of armèd men, 350  
Their hearts were troubled, and their courage sank.  
Thoas, Andræmon's son, the bravest far  
Among the Ætolians, skilled to cast the spear  
And combat hand to hand, addressed the Greeks.  
In council few excelled him, when the youths 355  
Assembled for debate. With prudent speech

Thoas bespake his fellow-warriors thus:—

“Gods! what a marvel do mine eyes behold;  
Hector has risen from death! We fully thought,  
Each one of us, that, smitten by the hand  
Of Telamonian Ajax, he had died.

360

Some god hath rescued and restored to strength  
This Hector who hath slain, and yet will slay,  
I fear, so many Greeks. He comes not thus  
Leading the charge without the aid of Jove,  
The God of Thunders. Now let all of us  
Follow this counsel: bid the multitude  
Retreat upon the ships, and let the rest,  
Who boast ourselves the bravest of the host,  
Stand firm and breast his onset, and so break  
Its fury with our lifted spears. I think,  
With all his rage, he will be slow to fling  
Himself into a band of armed Greeks.”

365

370

He spake; they hearkened and at once complied;  
The Ajaxes, the Prince Idomeneus,  
Teucer, Meriones, and Meges, peer  
Of Mars, assembled all the chiefs, and ranked  
Their files to encounter Hector and his band  
Of Trojans, while the multitude fell back  
To the Greek galleys. Then, in close array,

375

380

The Trojan host moved forward. Hector led  
The van in rapid march. Before him walked  
Phœbus, the terrible ægis in his hands  
Dazzlingly bright within its shaggy fringe,  
By Vulcan forged, the great artificer, 35  
And given to Jupiter, with which to rout  
Armies of men. With this in hand he led  
The assailants on. The Achæans kept their ground  
In serried ranks, and a sharp yell arose  
From Greeks and Trojans. Arrows from the string 40  
Flew through the air, and spears from valiant hands.  
Some pierced the breasts of warrior-youths, but more  
Fell half-way ere they reached their aim, and plunged  
Into the ground, still hungering for their prey.  
As long as Phœbus held the ægis still, 45  
The weapons reached and wounded equally  
Both armies, and in both the people fell;  
But ever when the god looked face to face  
On the Greek knights, and shook the orb, and gave  
A mighty shout, he made their hearts to sink 50  
Within their bosoms, and their courage fled.  
As when two beasts of prey at dead of night  
Suddenly, while their keeper is away,  
Scatter a herd of beeves or flock of sheep,



So the disheartened Greeks were put to rout,  
For Phœbus sent among them fear, and gave  
Victory to Hector and the men of Troy.

405

Then, as the lines were broken, man slew man.  
First Stichius fell by Hector's hand, and next  
Arcesilaus; one was chief among  
The mailed Bœotians, one the trusty friend  
Of brave Menestheus. Medon fell before  
Æneas, and with him Iasus died.

410

Medon was great Oïleus' base-born son,  
And Ajax was his brother, and he dwelt  
In Phylacè, an exile, for his hand  
Had slain the brother of his father's wife,  
The step-dame Eriopis, late espoused.

415

Iasus was appointed to command  
The warriors sent from Athens, and he claimed  
His birth from Sphelus, son of Bucolus.  
Mecistes fell before Polydamas.

420

Polites struck down Echius in the van,  
And Clonius died by great Agenor's hand;  
And Paris, when Deïochus had turned  
To flee, among the foremost combatants,  
Smote him upon the shoulder from behind,  
And drave the brazen weapon through his heart.

425

Then, while the Trojans stripped the dead, the Greeks  
Fled every way, and, falling as they ran 430  
Into the trench and on the stakes, were driven,  
Back o'er the rampart. Hector lifted up  
His mighty voice, and bade the Trojans leave  
The bloody spoil and hasten to the ships.

"And whomsoever I shall find apart 435  
In any place, at distance from the ships,  
There will I slay him. None of all his kin,  
Women or men, shall build his funeral pile,  
But dogs shall tear his limbs in sight of Troy."

He spake; and on the shoulders of his steeds 440  
He laid the lash, and urged them toward the foe,  
And cheered the Trojans on. They joined their shouts  
To his, and charged with all their steeds and cars;  
And fearful was the din. Apollo marched  
Before them, treading down with mighty feet 445  
The banks of the deep ditch, and casting them  
Back to the middle, till a causeway rose,  
Broad, and of length like that to which a spear  
Reaches when thrown by one who tries his strength.  
O'er this the Trojans poured into the camp 450  
By squadrons, with Apollo still in front,  
Holding the marvellous ægis. He with ease

O'erthrew the rampart. As a boy at play  
Among the sea-shore sands in childish sport  
Scatters with feet and hands the little mounds 455  
He reared, thus didst thou cause the mighty work,  
O archer Phœbus, which the Greeks had reared  
With so much toil, to crumble. Thou didst fill  
Their hearts with eager thoughts of flight, till, hemmed  
Between the assailants and their ships, they stopped 460  
And bade each other stand, and raised their hands  
To all the gods, and offered vows aloud.  
Gerenian Nestor, guardian of the Greeks,  
With arms extended toward the starry skies,  
Prayed earnestly: "O Father Jove, if e'er 465  
In fruitful Argos there were burned to thee  
The thighs of fattened oxen or of sheep,  
By one who asked a safe return to Greece,  
And thou didst promise it, remember him,  
God of Olympus, and avert from us 470  
The day of evil. Suffer not the Greeks  
To perish, slaughtered by the sons of Troy."  
So spake he supplicating. Jupiter  
The All-disposer thundered as he heard  
The old man's prayer. The Trojans by that voice 475  
Of ægis-bearing Jove were moved to press

The Greeks more resolutely, and were filled  
With fiercer valor. As a mighty wave  
On the great ocean, driven before a gale  
Such as rolls up the hugest billow, sweeps 480  
O'er the ship's side, so swept the Trojan host  
With dreadful tumult o'er the wall. They drave  
Their steeds into the camp, and there they fought  
Beside the galley-sterns, and hand to hand, 484  
With two-edged spears,—they from their cars, the Greeks  
From their black ships on high with long-stemmed poles  
Which lay upon the decks, prepared for fight  
At sea, and strongly joined to blades of brass.

Patroclus, while the Greeks and Trojans fought  
Around the wall, at distance from the fleet 490  
Sat with the brave Eurypylus in his tent,  
Amusing him with pleasant talk, and dressed  
His wound with balms that calmed the bitter pain.  
But when he saw the Trojans bursting in  
Over the wall, and heard the din, and saw 495  
The Achaians put to rout, he gave a cry  
Of sudden grief, and with his open hands  
Smote both his thighs, and sorrowfully said:—

“Eurypylus, I cannot stay with thee,  
Much as thou needest me, for desperate grows 500

The struggle. Now let thine attendant take  
The charge of thee. I hasten to persuade  
Achilles to the field. Who knows but I,  
With Jove's good help, may change his purpose yet?  
For potent are the counsels of a friend."

509

The hero spake, and instantly his feet  
Bore him away. Meanwhile the Achaian host  
Firmly withstood the onset of their foes.  
And yet, though greater was their multitude,  
They could not drive the Trojans from the fleet,  
Nor could the Trojans break, with all their power,  
The serried lines, and reach the tents and ships.  
As when a plumb-line, in the skilful hands  
Of shipwright well instructed in his art  
By Pallas, squares the beam that builds a bark,  
So even was the fortune of the fray.

510

515

While some beside one galley waged the war,  
And others round another, Hector came  
To encounter Ajax the renowned, and both  
Fought for one ship. The Trojan could not drive  
The Greek away, and burn his ship with fire,  
Nor the Greek drive the Trojan, for a god  
Had brought him thither. Then did Ajax smite  
Caletor, son of Clytius, with his spear

520

Upon the breast, as he was bringing fire 525  
To burn the ship; he dropped the torch, and fell,  
With clashing armor. Hector, as he saw  
His kinsman lying slain amid the dust  
By the black galley, raised his voice, and thus  
Called to the Lycians and the men of Troy:— 530

“Hear, men of Troy and Lycia, and ye sons  
Of Dardanus, who combat hand to hand,  
Stand firm, and never yield this narrow ground.  
Rescue the son of Clytius, who has fallen  
Before the ships, nor let the Achaians make 535  
His arms their spoil.” The hero spake, and aimed  
His shining spear at Ajax, whom it missed,  
But smote Lycophron, Mastor’s son, who served  
Ajax, and dwelt with him, for he had left  
His native land, Cythera, having slain 540  
One of the gallant Cytherean race.

Him Hector smote upon the head beneath  
The ear with his keen weapon, as he stood  
Near Ajax; from the galley’s stern he fell  
Headlong upon the ground, with lifeless limbs. 545  
Then to his brother Teucer Ajax spake:—

“Dear Teucer, see, our faithful friend is gone,  
The son of Mastor, from Cythera’s isle,

Whom we had learned to honor equally  
With our own parents in our palaces. 550

He falls before the great-souled Hector's hand.  
Where, then, are now thy shafts that carry death,  
And where the bow that Phœbus gave to thee?"

He spake, and Teucer, hearkening, came in haste,  
With his bent bow, and quiver full of shafts, 555

And, standing near him, sent his arrows forth  
Among the Trojan warriors. There he smote  
Clitus, Pisenor's eminent son, the friend  
Of the renowned Polydamas, who claimed  
His birth from Panthoüs. Clitus held the reins, 560

Guiding the coursers of Polydamas  
Where most the crowded Grecian phalanxes  
Wavered and broke, that so he might support  
Hector and his companions. Soon he met,  
Brave as he was, disaster which no hand 565

Had power to avert: the bitter arrow struck  
His neck behind, and from the chariot-seat  
He fell to earth; the startled steeds sprang back;  
The empty chariot rattled. This the king  
Polydamas perceived, and came to meet 570

His steeds, and gave them to Astinoüs,  
The son of Protiäon, charging him

To keep them ever near, and in his sight,  
While he, returning, mingled with the throng  
That struggled in the van. Then Teucer aimed 575  
Another shaft at Hector mailed in brass,  
Which, had it reached him fighting gallantly,  
Had made him leave the battle, for his life  
Had ended there. The act was not unseen  
By All-disposing Jupiter, whose power 580  
Protected Hector, and denied the Greek  
The glory hoped for; for he snapped in twain  
The firmly twisted cord as Teucer drew  
That perfect bow; the brazen arrow flew  
Aside; the warrior's hands let fall the bow, 585  
And, shuddering, he bespake his brother thus:—

“Now woe is me! some deity, no doubt,  
Brings all our plans to nought. 'Tis he whose touch  
Strikes from my hand the bow, and snaps in twain  
The cord just twisted, which I bound myself 590  
This morning to the bow, that it might bear  
The frequent arrow bounding toward the foe.”

He spake, and thus replied the man of might,  
The Telamonian Ajax: “Lay aside  
Thy bow, my brother, and thy store of shafts, 595  
Since, in displeasure with the Greeks, a god



Has made them useless. Haste to arm thy hand  
With a long spear, and on thy shoulders lay  
A buckler, and with these attack the foe,  
And bid thy fellows stand. Let Trojans see 600  
That, even though the day thus far be theirs,  
They cannot lay their hands on our good ships  
Without a mighty struggle. Let us all  
Be mindful of our fame for gallant deeds."

He spake, and Teucer went to place the bow 605  
Within the tents, and on his shoulders hung  
A fourfold shield, and placed on his grand brows  
A stately helmet with a horse-hair crest  
That nodded fearfully. He took in hand  
A ponderous spear with brazen blade, and sprang 610  
Forward with hasty steps, and stood beside  
His brother Ajax. Hector, when he saw  
That Teucer's shafts had failed him, called aloud  
Upon the men of Lycia and of Troy: —

"Ye men of Troy and Lycia, and ye sons 615  
Of Dardanus who combat hand to hand,  
Acquit yourselves like men, my friends, and prove  
Your fiery valor by these roomy ships;  
For I have seen with mine own eyes the shafts  
Of their chief warrior rendered impotent 620

By Jupiter. His hand is plainly seen  
Among the sons of men; to some he gives  
Glory above the rest; from some he takes  
The glory, and withdraws from their defence.  
He withers now the courage of the Greeks, 625  
And succors us. Press closely round the fleet,  
And combat. Whosoe'er among you all,  
Wounded or beaten down, shall meet his death,  
So let him die; 't is no inglorious fate  
To perish fighting in his country's cause; 630  
And he shall leave his wife and children safe,  
His home and household store inviolate,  
If now the Greeks depart to their own land."

With words like these he filled their hearts anew  
With strength and courage. On the other side 635  
Ajax exhorted thus his warrior friends:—

"Shame on you, Greeks! We perish here, unless  
We rescue with strong arms our host and fleet.  
Think ye that, should the crested Hector seize  
Our galleys, ye may reach your homes on foot? 640  
Hear ye not Hector's voice, who, fiercely bent  
To burn our ships with fire, is cheering on  
His warriors? To no dance he summons them,  
But to the battle. Nought is left for us,

And other counsel there is none, save this: 645  
Close with the foe; let every hand put forth  
Its strength; far better 't were to die at once,  
Or make at once our safety sure, than thus  
To waste away, in lingering fight, beside  
Our ships, destroyed by weaker arms than ours." 650

So spake the chief, and all who heard received  
Courage and strength. Then Hector put to death  
Schedius, the son of Perimedes, prince  
Of the Phocæans. Ajax also slew  
Laodamas, Antenor's honored son, 655  
A chief of infantry. Polydamas  
Struck down Cyllenian Otus, who had come,  
The comrade of Phylides, at the head  
Of the high-souled Epeians. Meges saw,  
And rushed upon Polydamas, who sprang 660  
Aside unharmed, for Phœbus suffered not  
The son of Panthoüs thus to be o'erthrown,  
Fighting among the foremost. But the spear  
Of Meges wounded Cræsmus in the breast;  
He fell with clanging arms. The slayer stripped 665  
The corpse; but Dolops, son of Lampus, skilled  
To wield the spear, leaped on him in the act.  
Lampus, the father, best of men, was son

Of king Laomedon, and eminent  
For warlike prowess. Dolops struck the shield 670  
Of Meges in the midst; the corselet stayed  
The blade with its close-jointed plates, and saved  
The warrior's life. That corselet Phyleus brought  
From Ephyre, beside the Selleis,  
Given by his host, Euphetes, king of men, 675  
For his defence in battle, and it now  
Preserved his son from death. Then Meges smote  
With his sharp spear the helm that Dolops wore,  
And from its summit struck the horse-hair crest,  
New-tinged with purple, and the cone entire 680  
Fell midst the dust. While Meges, standing firm,  
Fought thus, and hoped the victory, to his aid  
Came warlike Menelaus, unobserved,  
And, standing near, smote Dolops from behind,  
Beneath the shoulder, and drave through the spear 685  
Till it appeared beyond. The Trojan fell  
Upon his face, and both the Greeks rushed on  
To wrench the brazen armor from his limbs,  
When Hector saw his fall and called aloud  
Upon the kindred of the slain. He first 690  
Rebuked the valiant Melanippus, son  
Of Hicetaon, who but lately fed

His slow-paced beeves at Percotè, while yet  
The enemy was far from Troy; but when  
The Achaians landed from their well-oared barks, 695  
He came to Troy, and took an eminent place  
Among the Trojans. Near to Priam's halls  
He had his dwelling, honored equally  
With Priam's sons. Him Hector thus rebuked:—

“Why, Melanippus, are we loitering thus? 700  
Grievest thou not to see thy kinsman slain?  
And see'st thou not how eagerly the Greeks  
Are spoiling Dolops of his arms? Come on  
With me. No time is this for distant fight,  
But either we must rout the Greeks, or they 705  
Will level to the ground the lofty towers  
Of Ilium, and will slay its citizens.”

He spake, and led the way; his godlike friend  
Followed him, while the son of Telamon,  
Ajax, exhorted thus the sons of Greece:— 710

“Be men, my friends, and let a noble dread  
Of shame possess your hearts, and jealously  
Look to each other's honor in the heat  
Of battle; for to men who flee there comes  
No glory, and that way no safety lies.” 715

He spake, and all were eager to drive back

The assaulting foe; they heeded well his words,  
And drew around their barks a fence of mail,  
While Jove urged on the Trojans. Then it was  
That Menelaus, brave in battle, spake 720  
To rouse the courage of Antilochus:—

“Antilochus, there is no other Greek  
Younger than thou, or fleetier; none so strong  
For combat. Would that, springing on the foe,  
Thou mightest strike some Trojan warrior down.” 725

So speaking, he drew back; but he had roused  
The courage of his friend, who, springing forth  
From midst the foremost combatants, took aim,  
First looking keenly round, with his bright spear,  
From which the Trojans shrank as they beheld 730  
The hero cast it. Not in vain he threw  
The weapon, for it struck upon the breast  
Brave Melanippus, Hicetaon's son;  
Beneath the pap it smote him as he came.  
He fell with ringing arms; Antilochus 735  
Sprang toward him like a hound that springs to seize  
A wounded fawn, which, leaping from its lair,  
Is stretched disabled by the hunter's dart.  
So sprang the stout Antilochus on thee,  
O Melanippus!—sprang to spoil thy limbs 740

Of armor; but the noble Hector saw,  
And, hastening through the thick of battle, came  
Against him. Mighty as he was in war,  
Yet ventured not Antilochus to wait  
His coming; but as flees a savage beast, 745  
Conscious of guilty deed, when, having slain  
Herdsman or hound, that kept the pastured kine,  
He steals away before a crowd of men,  
So fled the son of Nestor. On his rear  
The Trojans under Hector poured a storm 750  
Of weapons, and the din was terrible.  
Yet when he reached the serried ranks of Greece  
He turned and stood. Meanwhile the Trojan host,  
Like ravening lions, fiercely rushed against  
The galleys, that the will of Jupiter 755  
Might be fulfilled; for now he nerved their limbs  
With vigor ever new, while he denied  
Stout hearts and victory to the Greeks, and cheered  
Their foes with hope. His purpose was to give  
The victory to Hector, Priam's son, 760  
Till he should cast upon the beakèd ships  
The fierce, devouring fire, and bring to pass  
The end for which the cruel Thetis prayed.  
Therefore did Jove the All-disposer wait

Till from a burning galley he should see 765  
The flames arise. Then must the Trojan host,—  
Such was his will,—retreating from the fleet,  
Yield to the Greeks the glory of the day.  
For this he moved the already eager heart  
Of Hector, son of Priam, to attack 770  
The roomy ships. The hero was aroused  
To fury fierce as Mars when brandishing  
His spear, or as a desolating flame  
That rages on a mountain-side among  
The thickets of a close-grown wood. His lips 775  
Were white with foam; his eyes from underneath  
His frowning brows streamed fire; and as he fought,  
Upon the hero's temples fearfully  
The helmet nodded. Jupiter himself  
Sent aid from his high seat, and heaped on him 780  
Honor and fame beyond the other chiefs,—  
And they were many,—for his term of life  
Was to be short. Minerva even now  
Was planning to bring on its closing day,  
Made fatal by the might of Peleus' son. 785  
And now he strove to break the Grecian ranks,  
Assaulting where he saw the thickest crowd  
And the best weapons; yet in vain he strove



With all his valor. Through the serried lines  
He could not break; the Greeks in solid squares 790  
Resisted, like a rock that huge and high  
By the gray deep abides the buffetings  
Of the shrill winds and swollen waves that beat  
Against it. Firmly thus the Greeks withstood  
The Trojan host, and fled not. In a blaze 795  
Of armor, Hector, rushing toward their ranks,  
Fell on them like a mighty billow raised  
By the strong cloud-born winds, that flings itself  
On a swift ship, and whelms it in its spray,  
While fearfully among the cordage howls 800  
The blast; the sailors tremble and are faint  
With fear, as men who deem their death-hour nigh.  
So the Greek warriors were dismayed at heart.

As when a hungry lion suddenly  
Springs on a herd of kine that crop the grass 805  
By hundreds in the broad moist meadow-grounds,  
Beneath the eye of one who never learned  
To guard his hornèd charge from beasts of prey,  
But ever walks before them or behind,  
While the grim spoiler bounds into the midst 810  
And makes a prey of one, and all the rest  
Are scattered in affright, so all the Greeks

Were scattered by the will of heaven before  
Hector and Father Jove. Yet only one,  
Young Periphœtes of Mycenæ, fell, 815  
The son of Copreus. Once his father went  
An envoy from Eurystheus to the court  
Of mighty Hercules. The son excelled  
The father in all gifts of form and mind,  
In speed, in war, in council eminent 820  
Among the noblest of his land. His death  
Brought Hector new renown; for as he turned,  
Stepping by chance upon his buckler's rim,  
That reached the ground, — the buckler which had been  
His fence against the enemy's darts, — he fell 825  
Backward, his helmet clashing fearfully  
Around his temples. Hector saw, and came  
In haste, and pierced his bosom with his spear,  
Among his fellow-warriors, who with grief  
Beheld, yet dared not aid him, such their awe 830  
Of noble Hector. Now the Greeks retired  
Among that row of galleys which were first  
Drawn up the beach; the foe poured after them,  
In hot pursuit; again the Greeks fell back,  
Constrained, and left that foremost row behind, 835  
And stood beside their tents in close array,

And not dispersed throughout the camp, for shame  
And fear restrained them, and unceasingly  
With shouts they bade each other bravely stand.

Chiefly Gerenian Nestor, wise to guide  
The counsels of the Greeks, adjured them all,  
And in their parents' name, to keep their ground.

840

“O friends, be men; so act that none may feel  
Ashamed to meet the eyes of other men.  
Think each one of his children and his wife,  
His home, his parents, living yet or dead.  
For them, the absent ones, I supplicate,  
And bid you rally here, and scorn to fly.”

845

He spake, and his brave words to every heart  
Carried new strength and courage. Pallas then  
Lifted the heaven-sent cloud that veiled the fight,  
And all things in the clear full light were seen  
On either side, both where the galleys lay  
And where the warriors struggled. They beheld  
Hector the great in war, and all his host,  
Both those who formed the rear and wielded not  
Their arms, and those who combated in front  
Beside the ships. And now it pleased no more  
The soul of valiant Ajax to remain  
In the thick squadrons with the other Greeks,

850

855

860

But, striding on the galley-decks, he bore  
A sea-pike two and twenty cubits long,  
Huge, and beset with iron nails. As when  
One who is skilled to vault on running steeds  
Chooses four horses from a numerous herd, 865  
And on the highway to a populous town  
Drives them, while men and women in a crowd  
Behold his feats with wonder, as he leaps  
Boldly, without a fall, from steed to steed,  
And back again, and all the while they run, 870  
So on the lofty decks of those good ships  
From ship to ship flew Ajax, lifting up  
His mighty voice,—a shout that reached to heaven,—  
And bade the Greeks defend their fleet and tents  
Nor loitered Hector in those armed throngs 875  
Of Troy, but as a tawny eagle swoops  
Upon a flock of birds that seek their food  
Along a river's border,—geese or cranes,  
Or long-necked swans,—so Hector in hot haste  
Sprang toward a galley with an azure prow, 880  
While mightily the power of Jove impelled  
The hero onward, and inflamed his train  
With courage. Fiercely then around the ships  
The struggle was renewed. Thou wouldst have said

No toils of war could tire those resolute arms, 885  
So stubbornly they fought. In every mind  
The thought was this: the Greeks were in despair  
Of rescue, and believed their hour had come  
To perish; every Trojan hoped to give  
The fleet to flames, and slay the sons of Greece. 890  
With thoughts like these the hostile warriors closed.  
Then Hector laid his hand upon the stern  
Of a stanch galley, beautiful and swift,  
In which Protesilaüs came to Troy, —  
It never bore him back. Around its keel 895  
The Trojans and the Greeks fought hand to hand,  
And slew each other. For no more they sent  
The arrow or the javelin from afar,  
Waiting to see the wound it gave, but each  
With equal fury pressed upon his foe 900  
With halberd and with trenchant battle-axe,  
Huge sword and two-edged spear. Upon the ground  
Had fallen many a fair black-hilted sword  
With solid handles, some from slain men's hands,  
Some from lopped arms of warriors; the dark earth 905  
Ran red with blood. But Hector, having laid  
His hand upon the galley's stern, held fast  
To the carved point, and called upon his men: —

“Bring fire, and press in throngs upon the foe;  
For now doth Jove vouchsafe to us a day 910  
Worth all the past,—a day on which we make  
The ships our prey. Against the will of Heaven  
They landed on our coast, and brought on us  
Disasters many, through the coward fears  
Of our own elders, who denied my wish 915  
To combat at the galleys, and held back  
The people. But if then the Thunderer  
Darkened our minds, his spirit moves us now  
In what we do, and we obey his will.”

He spake; and they with fiercer valor fell 920  
Upon the Greeks. Even Ajax could no more  
Withstand the charge, but, fearing to be slain,  
Amid a storm of darts withdrew a space,  
To where the seven-foot bench of rowers lay,  
And left the galley's stern. There, as he stood, 925  
He watched the assailants keenly, and beat back  
With thrusts of his long spear whoever brought  
The firebrand. With terrific shouts he called  
Upon the Greeks to combat manfully :—

“O friends, Achaian heroes, ministers 930  
Of Mars, be men, be mindful of your fame  
For valor. Do ye dream that in your rear

Are succors waiting us, or firmer walls  
That may protect us yet? Nay, no fenced town  
Have we for refuge, flanked with towers from which 935  
Fresh troops may take our place. Between the sea  
And country of the well-armed Trojans lie  
Our tents; our native land is far away;  
And now our only hope of safety left  
Is in our weapons: there is no retreat." 940

He spake, and mightily with his sharp spear  
Thrust at whoever of the men of Troy  
At Hector's bidding came with fire to burn  
The galleys. On the blade of that long spear  
The hero took them as they came, and slew 945  
In close encounter twelve before the fleet.

*BOOK XVI.*

**S**UCH was the struggle for that gallant bark.  
Meanwhile Patroclus stood beside his friend,  
The shephērd of the people, Peleus' son,  
And shed hot tears, as when a fountain sheds  
Dark waters streaming down a precipice. 5  
The great Achilles, swift of foot, beheld  
And pitied him, and spake these wingèd words:—  
    “Why weepst thou, Patroclus, like a girl,—  
A little girl that by her mother's side  
Runs, importuning to be taken up, 10  
And plucks her by the robe, and stops her way,  
And looks at her, and cries, until at last  
She rests within her arms? Thou art like her,  
Patroclus, with thy tears. Dost thou then bring  
Sad tidings to the Myrmidons or me? 15  
Or hast thou news from Phthia? It is said  
That still Menœtius, son of Actor, lives,  
And Peleus also, son of Æacus,



Among the Myrmidons. Full bitterly  
Should we lament to hear that either died.  
Or mournest thou because the Achaians fall  
Through their own folly by the roomy ships?  
Speak, and hide nothing, for I too would know."

20

And thou, O knight Patroclus, with a sigh  
Deep-drawn, didst answer thus: "Be not displeased,  
Achilles, son of Peleus, bravest far  
Of all the Achaian army! for the Greeks  
Endure a bitter lot. The chiefs who late  
Were deemed their mightiest are within the ships,  
Wounded or stricken down. There Diomed,  
The gallant son of Tydeus, lies, and there  
Ulysses, the great spearman, wounded both;  
And Agamemnon; and Eurypylus,  
Driven from the field, an arrow in his thigh.  
Round them the healers, skilled in remedies,  
Attend and dress their painful wounds, while thou,  
Achilles, sittest here implacable.  
O, never be such fierce resentments mine  
As thou dost cherish, who art only brave  
For mischief! Whom wilt thou hereafter aid,  
If now thou rescue not the perishing Greeks?  
O merciless! it cannot surely be

25

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That Peleus was thy father, or the queen  
Thetis thy mother; the green sea instead  
And rugged precipices brought thee forth, 45  
For savage is thy heart. But if thou heed  
The warning of some god, if thou hast heard  
Aught which thy goddess-mother has received  
From Jove, send me at least into the war,  
And let me lead thy Myrmidons, that thus 50  
The Greeks may have some gleam of hope. And give  
The armor from thy shoulders. I will wear  
Thy mail, and then the Trojans, at the sight,  
May think I am Achilles, and may pause  
From fighting, and the warlike sons of Greece, 55  
Tired as they are, may breathe once more, and gain  
A respite from the conflict. Our fresh troops  
May easily drive back upon their town  
The weary Trojans from our tents and fleet."

So spake he, sighing; rash and blind, he asked 60  
Death for himself and evil destiny.

Achilles the swift-footed also drew  
A heavy sigh, and thus in turn he spake:—

"What, O divine Patroclus, hast thou said?  
I fear no omen yet revealed to me; 65  
Nor has my goddess-mother told me aught

From Jove; but ever in my heart and soul  
Rankles the painful sense of injury done  
By one who, having greater power, deprives  
An equal of his right, and takes away  
The prize he won. This is my wrong, and this  
The cause of all my bitterness of heart.  
Her whom the sons of Greece bestowed on me  
As my reward, a trophy of my spear,  
After the sack of a fenced city,—her  
Did Agamemnon, son of Atreus, take  
Out of my hands, as if I were a wretch,  
A worthless outcast. But let that affront  
Be with the things that were. It is not well  
To bear a grudge forever. I have said  
My anger should not cease to burn until  
The clamor of the battle and the assault  
Should reach the fleet. But go thou and put on  
My well-known armor; lead into the field  
My Myrmidons, men that rejoice in war,  
Since like a lowering cloud the men of Troy  
Surround the fleet, and the Achaians stand  
In narrow space close pressed beside the sea,  
And all the city of Ilium flings itself  
Against them, confident of victory,

Now that the glitter of my helm no more  
Flashes upon their eyes. Yet very soon  
Their flying host would fill the trenches here  
With corpses, had but Agamemnon dealt  
Gently with me; and now their squadrons close 95  
Around our army. Now no more the spear  
Is wielded by Tydides Diomed  
In rescue of the Greeks; no more the shout  
Of Agamemnon's hated throat is heard;  
But the man-queller Hector, lifting up 100  
His voice, exhorts the Trojans, who, in throngs,  
Raising the war-cry, fill the plain, and drive  
The Greeks before them. Gallantly lead on  
The charge, Patroclus; rescue our good ships;  
Let not the enemy give them to the flames, 105  
And cut us off from our desired return.  
Follow my counsel; bear my words in mind;  
So shalt thou win for me among the Greeks  
Great honor and renown, and they shall bring  
The beautiful maiden back with princely gifts. 110  
When thou hast driven the assailants from the fleet,  
Return thou hither. If the Thunderer,  
Husband of Juno, suffer thee to gain  
That victory, seek no further to prolong

The combat with the warlike sons of Troy, 115  
Apart from me, lest I be brought to shame,  
Nor, glorying in the battle and pursuit,  
Slaying the Trojans as thou goest, lead  
Thy men to Troy, lest from the Olympian mount  
One of the ever-living gods descend 120  
Against thee : Phœbus loves the Trojans well.  
But come as soon as thou shalt see the ships  
In safety ; leave the foes upon the plain  
Contending with each other. Would to Jove  
The All-Father, and to Pallas, and the god 125  
Who bears the bow, Apollo, that of all  
The Trojans, many as they are, and all  
The Greeks, not one might be reprieved from death,  
While thou and I alone were left alive  
To overthrow the sacred walls of Troy." 130

So talked they with each other. Ajax, whelmed  
Beneath a storm of darts, meantime but ill  
Endured the struggle, for the will of Jove  
And the fierce foe prevailed. His shining helm  
Rang fearfully, as on his temples fell, 135  
Stroke following after stroke, the weapons hurled  
Against its polished studs. The buckler borne  
Firmly on his left arm, and shifted oft

From side to side, had wearied it, and yet  
The Trojans, pressing round him, could not drive, 140  
With all their darts, the hero from his place.  
Heavily heaved his panting chest; his limbs  
Streamed with warm sweat; there was no breathing-time;  
On danger danger followed, toil on toil.

Now, Muses, dwellers of Olympus, tell 145  
How first the galleys of the Greeks were fired.

Hector drew near, and smote with his huge sword  
The ashen spear of Ajax just below  
The socket of the blade, and cut the stem  
In two. The son of Telamon in vain 150  
Brandished the severed weapon, while afar  
The brazen blade flew off, and ringing fell  
To earth. Then Ajax in his mighty mind  
Acknowledged that the gods were in the war,  
And shuddered, knowing that the Thunderer 155  
Was thwarting all his warlike purposes,  
And willed the victory to Troy. The chief  
Withdrew beyond the reach of spears, while fast  
The eager enemy hurled the blazing brands  
At the swift ship, and wrapped the stern in flames 160  
Unquenchable. Achilles saw, and smote  
His thigh, and spake: "Patroclus, noble friend

And knight, make haste: already I behold  
The flames that rage with fury at the fleet.  
Now, lest the enemy seize our ships and we  
Be barred of our return, put quickly on  
Thy armor; be my task to call the troops."

265

He spake: Patroclus then in glittering brass  
Arrayed himself; and first around his thighs  
He put the beautiful greaves, and fastened them  
With silver clasps; around his chest he bound  
The breastplate of the swift Æacides,  
With star-like points, and richly chased; he hung  
The sword with silver studs and blade of brass  
Upon his shoulders, and with it the shield  
Solid and vast; upon his gallant head  
He placed the glorious helm with horsehair plume,  
That grandly waved on high. Two massive spears  
He took, that fitted well his grasp, but left  
The spear which great Achilles only bore,  
Heavy and huge and strong, and which no arm  
Among the Greeks save his could poise; his strength  
Alone sufficed to wield it. 'T was an ash  
Which Chiron felled in Pelion's top, and gave  
To Peleus, that it yet might be the death  
Of heroes. Then he called, to yoke with speed

170

175

180

185

The steeds, Automedon, whom he esteemed  
Next to Achilles, that great scatterer  
Of armies; for he found him ever firm  
In battle, breasting faithfully its shock. 190  
Automedon led forth to take the yoke  
Xanthus and Balius, coursers that in speed  
Were like the wind. Podargè brought them forth  
To Zephyrus, while she, the Harpy, grazed  
By ocean's streams. Upon the outer side 195  
He joined to them the noble Pedasus,  
Brought by Achilles from the captured town  
Where ruled Eëtion. Though of mortal stock,  
Well might he match with those immortal steeds.  
Meanwhile Achilles armed the Myrmidons, 200  
Passing from tent to tent. Like ravening wolves,  
Terribly strong, that, having slain among  
The hills an antlered stag of mighty size,  
Tear and devour it, while their jaws are stained  
With its red blood, then gather in a herd 205  
About some darkly flowing stream, and lap  
The sullen water with their slender tongues,  
And drop the clots of blood from their grim mouths,  
And, although gorged, are fierce and fearless still, —  
So came the leaders of the Myrmidons, 210



In rushing crowds, about the valiant friend  
Of swift Æacides. Among them stood  
Achilles, great in war, encouraging  
The charioteers and warriors armed with shields.

Achilles, dear to Jupiter, had led 215  
Fifty swift barks to Ilium, and in each  
Were fifty men, companions at the oar.  
O'er these he gave command to five; himself,  
Supreme in power, was ruler over all.

One band, the nobly armed Menestheus led, 220  
Son of Spêrcheius. To that river-god,  
Beautiful Polydora brought him forth,  
Daughter of Peleus; she, a mortal maid,  
Met an immortal's love. Yet Borus, son  
Of Periêres, owned the boy and took 225  
The mother for his bride, with princely dower.

Eudorus led the second band, a youth  
Of warlike mould, whom Polymela bore,  
Daughter of Phylas, graceful in the dance.  
In secrecy she brought him forth, for once 230  
The mighty Argus-queller saw the maid  
Among the choir of those who danced and sang  
At Dian's festival, the huntress-queen,  
Who bears the golden shafts; he saw and loved

And, climbing to her chamber, met by stealth 235  
The damsel, and she bore a gallant son,  
Eudorus, swift of foot and brave in war.  
When Ilithyia, midwife goddess, gave  
The boy to see the pleasant light of day,  
The stout Echecleus, son of Actor, brought 240  
The mother to his house, with liberal dower.  
The aged Phylas reared the child she left  
Tenderly as a son, and loved him well.  
Pisander, warlike son of Mæmalus,  
Commanded the third squadron; none like him 245  
Among the Myrmidons could wield the spear  
Except Pelides. Phœnix, aged knight,  
Led the fourth squadron. With the fifth and last  
There came Alcimedon, Laerceus' son,  
As leader. When their ranks were duly formed, 250  
Achilles spake to them in earnest words:—  
“Now, Myrmidons, forget no single word  
Of all the threats ye uttered against Troy  
Since first my wrath began. Ye blame me much,  
And say: ‘Hard-hearted son of Peleus, sure 255  
Thy mother must have suckled thee on gall;  
For sternly thou dost keep us in the ships,  
Unwilling as we are. We might, at least,

Crossing the sea, return in our good ships,  
If thus thine anger is to last.' These words 260  
Ye utter oft when our assemblies meet,  
And now the great occasion is at hand  
Which ye have longed for; now let him whose heart  
Is fearless meet the Trojans valiantly."

He spake, and roused their courage and their might; 265  
And as they heard their king they brought their ranks  
To closer order. As an architect  
Builds up, with closely fitting stones, the wall  
Of some tall mansion, proof against the blast,  
So close were now the helms and bossy shields. 270  
Shield leaned on shield, and helm on helm, and man  
On man, and on the glittering helmet-cones  
The horse-hair plumes with every motion touched  
Each other, so compact the squadrons stood.  
Two heroes, nobly armed, were at their head, 275  
Patroclus and Automedon, and both  
Had but one thought,—to combat in the van.

Entering his tent, Achilles raised the lid  
Of a fair coffer, beautifully wrought,  
Which silver-footed Thetis placed on board 280  
His bark, and filled with tunics, cloaks well lined,  
And fleecy carpets. There he also kept

A goblet richly chased, from which no lip  
Of man, save his, might drink the dark red wine,  
Nor wine be poured to any god save Jove, 285  
The mighty Father. This he took in hand  
And purified with sulphur first, and then  
Rinsed with clear water. Next, with washen hands,  
He drew the dark red wine, and stood without,  
In the open space, and, pouring out the wine, 290  
Prayed with his eyes turned heavenward, not unheard  
By Jupiter, who wields the thunderbolt.

“Dodonian Jove, Pelasgian, sovereign King,  
Whose dwelling is afar, and who dost rule  
Dodona winter-bound, where dwell thy priests, 295  
The Selli, with unwashen feet, who sleep  
Upon the ground! Thou once hast heard my prayer,  
And thou hast honored me, and terribly  
Avenged me on the Greeks. Accomplish yet  
This one request of mine. I shall remain 300  
Among the rows of ships, but in my stead  
I send my comrade, who will lead to war  
My vast array of Myrmidons. With him,  
O God of Thunders, send the victory.  
Make his heart bold; let even Hector learn 305  
Whether my follower, though alone, can wage

Successful war, or conquer only then  
When I go forth with him into the field  
Of slaughter. When he shall have beaten back  
The assailants from the fleet, let him return 310  
Unharm'd to my good galleys and to me,  
With all his arms and all his valiant men."

So spake he, offering prayer, and Jupiter,  
The Great Disposer, hearkened. Half the prayer  
The All-Father granted him, and half denied: 315  
To drive the storm of battle from the fleet  
He granted, but denied his friend's return  
In safety. When the warrior thus had prayed,  
And poured the wine to Father Jove, he went  
Into his tent again, and there replaced 320  
The goblet in the coffer. Coming forth,  
He stood before the entrance to behold  
The terrible encounter of the hosts.

The newly armed, led by their gallant chief,  
Patroclus, marched in warlike order forth, 325  
And in high hope, to fall upon the foe.  
As wasps, that by the wayside build their cells,  
Angered from time to time by thoughtless boys,—  
Whence mischief comes to many,—if by chance  
Some passing traveller should unwittingly 330

Disturb them, all at once are on the wing,  
And all attack him, to defend their young;  
So fearless and so fierce the Myrmidons  
Poured from their fleet, and mighty was the din.

Patroclus with loud voice exhorted them:—

335

“O Myrmidons, companions of the son  
Of Peleus, bear in mind, my friends, your fame  
For valor, and be men, that we who serve  
Achilles, we who combat hand to hand,  
May honor him by our exploits, and teach  
Wide-ruling Agamemnon how he erred  
Slighting the bravest warrior of the Greeks.”

340

These words awoke the courage and the might  
Of all who heard them, and in close array  
They fell upon the Trojans. Fearfully  
The fleet around them echoed to the sound  
Of Argives shouting. When the Trojans saw,  
In glittering arms, Menæteus' gallant son  
And his attendant, every heart grew faint  
With fear; the close ranks wavered; for they thought  
That the swift son of Peleus at the fleet  
Had laid aside his wrath, and was again  
The friend of Agamemnon. Eagerly  
They looked around for an escape from death.

345

350

Then first Patroclus cast his shining spear 355  
Into the crowd before him, where they fought  
Most fiercely round the stern of the good ship  
Of brave Protesilaus. There it smote  
Pyræchmes, who had led from Amydon,  
On the broad Axius, his Pæonian knights. 360  
Through his right shoulder went the blade; he fell,  
Heavily groaning, to the earth. His band  
Of warriors from Pæonia, panic-struck,  
Fled from Patroclus as they saw their chief  
Cut off, their bravest in the battle-field. 365  
So from the ship he drave the foe, and quenched  
The blazing fire. There lay the half-burnt bark,  
While with a mighty uproar fled the host  
Of Troy, and from between the beakèd ships  
Poured after them with tumult infinite 370  
The Greeks. As when from some high mountain-top  
The God of Lightnings, Jupiter, sweeps off  
The overshadowing cloud, at once appear  
The watch-towers and the headland heights and lawns  
All in full light, and all the unmeasured depth 375  
Of ether opens, so the Greeks, when thus  
Their fleet was rescued from the hostile flame,  
Breathed for a space; and yet they might not cease

From battle, for not everywhere alike  
Were chased the Trojans from the dark-hulled ships 380  
Before the Greeks, but struggled still to keep  
The mastery, and yielded but to force.

Then in that scattered conflict of the chiefs  
Each Argive slew a warrior. With his spear  
The brave son of Menœtius made a thrust 385  
At Areïlochos, and pierced his thigh,  
Just as he turned away, and through the part  
Forced the keen weapon, splintering as it went  
The bone, and brought the Trojan to the ground;  
And warlike Menelaus pierced the breast 390  
Of Thoas where the buckler left it bare,  
And took his life. The son of Phyleus saw  
Amphiclus rushing on, and with his spear  
Met him and pierced his leg below the knee,  
Where brawniest is the limb. The blade cut through 395  
The sinews, and his eyes were closed in night.  
There fought the sons of Nestor. One of these,  
Antilochus, transfixed with his good spear  
Atymnius through the flank, and brought him down  
At his own feet. With sorrow Maris saw 400  
His brother fall, and toward Antilochus  
Flew to defend the corpse; but ere he strook,



The godlike Thrasymedes, with a blow  
That missed not, smote his shoulder, tearing off  
With the spear's blade upon the upper arm 405  
The muscles from the bone. With ringing arms  
He fell, and darkness gathered o'er his eyes.  
Thus were two brothers by two brothers slain,  
And sent to Erebus; two valiant friends  
Were they of King Sarpedon, and the sons 410  
Of Amisodarus, who reared and fed  
Chimera, the destroyer of mankind.

Orlean Ajax, springing forward, seized  
On Cleobulus, for the struggling crowd  
Hindered his flight. He took the Trojan's life, 415  
Smiting the neck with his huge-handled sword;  
The blade grew warm with blood, and cruel fate  
Brought darkness o'er the dying warrior's eyes.  
Peneleus fought with Lycon; each had cast  
His spear and missed his aim, and now with swords 420  
The twain encountered. Lycon dealt a stroke  
Upon the crested helmet of his foe,  
And the blade failed him, breaking at the hilt.  
Meantime Peneleus smote beneath the ear  
The neck of Lycon: deep the weapon went; 425  
The severed head, held only by the skin,  
Dropped to one side, and life forsook the limbs.

Meriones, o'ertaking Acamas,  
In rapid flight, discharged a mighty blow  
On his left shoulder as he climbed his car; 430  
He fell, and darkness gathered o'er his eyes.  
Then plunged Idomeneus the cruel spear  
Into the mouth of Erymas. The blade  
Passed on beneath the brain, and pierced the neck,  
And there divided the white bones. It dashed 435  
The teeth out; both the eyes were filled with blood,  
Which gushed from mouth and nostrils as he breathed;  
And the black cloud of death came over him.  
Thus every Grecian leader slew his man.

As ravening wolves that spring on lambs and kids, 440  
And seize them, wandering wide among the hills  
Beyond the keeper's care, and bear them off,  
And rend with cruel fangs their helpless prey,  
So fiercely did the Achaians fling themselves  
Upon the men of Troy, who only thought 445  
Of flight from that tumultuous strife, and quite  
Forgot their wonted valor. All the while  
The greater Ajax sought to hurl his spear  
At Hector, clad in brazen mail, who yet,  
Expert in battle, kept his ample chest 450  
Hid by his bull's-hide shield, and, though he heard

The hiss of darts and clash of spears, and saw  
The fortune of the field deserting him,  
Lingered to rescue his beloved friends.

As from the summit of Olympus spreads 455  
A cloud into the sky that late was clear,  
When Jove brings on the tempest, with such speed  
In clamorous flight the Trojans left the fleet,  
Yet passed they not the trench in seemly plight.  
The rapid steeds of Hector bore him safe 460  
Across with all his arms, while, left between  
The high banks of the trench, the Trojan host  
Struggled despairingly. The fiery steeds,  
Harnessed to many a chariot, left it there  
With broken pole. Patroclus followed close, 465  
With mighty voice encouraging the Greeks,  
And meditating vengeance on the foe,  
That noisily ran on, and right and left  
Were scattered, filling all the ways. The dust  
Rose thick and high, and spread, and reached the clouds,  
As with swift feet the Trojan coursers held 471  
Their way to Ilium from the tents and ships.  
Patroclus where he saw the wildest rout  
Drave thither, shouting threats. Full many a chief  
Fell under his own axle from his car, 475

And chariots with a crash were overthrown.  
The swift, immortal horses which the gods  
Bestowed on Peleus leaped the trench at once,  
Eager to reach the plain. As eagerly  
Patroclus longed to overtake and smite  
Hector, whose steeds were hurrying him away.

435

As when, in autumn time, the dark-brown earth  
Is whelmed with water from the stormy clouds,  
When Jupiter pours down his heaviest rains,  
Offended at men's crimes who override  
The laws by violence, and drive justice forth  
From the tribunals, heedless of the gods  
And their displeasure, — all the running streams  
Are swelled to floods, — the furious torrents tear  
The mountain slopes, and, plunging from the heights  
With mighty roar, lay waste the works of men,  
And fling themselves into the dark-blue sea, —  
Thus with loud tumult fled the Trojan horse.

445

490

Patroclus, having cut the nearest bands  
Of Troy in pieces, made his warriors turn  
Back to the fleet, and, eager as they were,  
Stopped the pursuit that led them toward the town.  
Then, in the area bounded by the sea,  
River, and lofty wall, he chased and smote

475

And took full vengeance. With his glittering spear 500  
He wounded Pronoüs where the buckler left  
The breast exposed; the Trojan with a clash  
Fell to the earth, and life forsook his limbs.  
Advancing in his might, Patroclus smote  
Thestor, the son of Enops, as he sat 505  
Cowering upon his sumptuous seat, o'ercome  
With fear, and dropped the reins. Through his right cheek  
Among the teeth Patroclus thrust his spear,  
And o'er the chariot's border drew him forth  
With the spear's stem. As when an angler sits 510  
Upon a jutting rock, and from the sea  
Draws a huge fish with line and gleaming hook,  
So did Patroclus, with his shining spear,  
Draw forth the panting Trojan from his car,  
And shook him clear: he fell to earth and died. 515  
As Eryalus then came swiftly on,  
Patroclus flung a stone, and on the brow  
Smote him; the Trojan's head, beneath the blow,  
Parted in two within the helm; he fell  
Headlong to earth, a prey to ghastly death. 520  
Then slew he Erymas, Amphoterus,  
Epaltes, Pyris, Ipheus, Echius,  
Tlepolemus, Damastor's son, and next

Euippus; nor was Polymelus spared,  
The son of Argias,—smitten all, and thrown, 535  
Slain upon slain, along their mother earth.

And now Sarpedon, as he saw his friends,  
The unbelted Lycians, falling by the hand  
Of Menœtiades, exhorted thus  
The gallant Lycians: “Shame upon you all, 530  
My Lycians! whither do you flee? Be bold!  
For I myself will meet this man, and learn  
Who walks the field in triumph thus, and makes  
Such havoc in our squadrons; for his hand  
Has laid full many a gallant warrior low.” 535

He spake, and from his car with all his arms  
Sprang to the ground, while on the other side  
Patroclus, as he saw him come, leaped down  
And left his chariot. As on some tall rock  
Two vultures, with curved talons and hooked beaks, 540  
Fight screaming, so these two with furious cries  
Advanced against each other. When the son  
Of crafty Saturn saw them meet, his heart  
Was touched with pity, and he thus bespake  
His spouse and sister Juno: “Woe is me! 545  
Sarpedon, most beloved of men, is doomed  
To die, o’ercome by Menœtiades.

And now I halt between two purposes,—  
Whether to bear him from this fatal fight,  
Alive and safe, to Lycia's fertile fields, 550  
Or let him perish by his enemy's hand."

Imperial, large-eyed Juno answered thus:—  
"What words, dread son of Saturn, hast thou said!  
Wouldst thou deliver from the common lot  
Of death a mortal doomed long since by fate? 555  
Do as thou wilt, but be thou sure of this,—  
The other gods will not approve. And bear  
In mind these words of mine. If thou shouldst send  
Sarpedon home to Lycia safe, reflect  
Some other god may claim the right, like thee, 560  
To rescue his beloved son from death  
In battle; for we know that in the war  
Round Priam's noble city are many sons  
Of gods, who will with vehement anger see  
Thy interposing hand. Yet if he be 565  
So dear to thee, and thou dost pity him,  
Let him in mortal combat be o'ercome  
By Menœtiades, and when the breath  
Of life has left his frame, give thou command  
To Death and gentle Sleep to bear him hence 570  
To the broad realm of Lycia. There his friends

And brethren shall perform the funeral rites;  
There shall they build him up a tomb, and rear  
A column,—honors that become the dead.”

He ceased, nor did the All-Father disregard      575  
Her words. He caused a bloody dew to fall  
Upon the earth in sorrow for the son  
Whom well he loved, and whom Patroclus soon  
Should slay upon the fertile plain of Troy,  
Far from the pleasant land that saw his birth.      580

The warriors now drew near. Patroclus slew  
The noble Thrasymelus, who had been  
Sarpedon’s valiant comrade in the war.  
Below the belt he smote him, and he fell  
Lifeless. Sarpedon threw his shining lance;      585  
It missed, but struck the courser Pegasus  
In the right shoulder. With a groan he fell  
In dust, and, moaning, breathed his life away.  
Then the two living horses sprang apart,  
And the yoke creaked, and the entangled reins      590  
Were useless, fastened to the fallen horse.  
Automedon, the mighty spearman, saw  
The remedy, and from his brawny thigh  
He drew his sword, and cut the outside horse  
Loose from his fellows. They again were brought      595



Together, and obeyed the reins once more;  
And the two chiefs renewed the mortal fight.

And now, again, Sarpedon's shining spear  
Was vainly flung; the point, in passing o'er  
Patroclus's left shoulder, gave no wound.

600

In turn, Patroclus, hurling not in vain  
His weapon, smote him where the midriff's web  
Holds the tough heart. He fell as falls an oak  
Or poplar or tall pine, which workmen hew  
Among the mountains with their sharpened steel

605

To frame a ship. So he before his steeds  
And chariot fell upon the bloody dust,  
And grasped it with his hands, and gnashed his teeth.  
As when a lion coming on a herd

Seizes, amid the crowd of stamping beeves,  
A tawny and high-mettled bull, that dies  
Bellowing in fury in the lion's jaws, —  
Like him, indignant to be overcome,

610

The leader of the bucklered Lycian host,  
Laid prostrate by Patroclus, called by name  
His dear companion, and addressed him thus: —

615

“Beloved Glaucus, mighty among men!  
Now prove thyself a hero, now be bold.  
Now, if thou have a warrior's spirit, think

Of naught but battle. Go from rank to rank, 620  
Exhorting all the Lycian chiefs to fight  
Around Sarpedon. Combat thou for me  
With thy good spear, for I shall be to thee  
A shame and a reproach through all thy days,  
If here the Greeks, beside whose ships I fall, 625  
Bear off my armor. Stand thou firm, and stir  
Thy people up to combat valiantly."

While he was speaking, death crept o'er his sight  
And stopped his breath. Patroclus set his heel  
Against his bosom, and plucked out the spear; 630  
The midriff followed it, and thus he drew  
The life and weapon forth at once. Meantime  
The Myrmidons held fast the snorting steeds,  
That, loosened from the Lycian's car, were bent  
On flight. The grief of Glaucus as he heard 635  
His comrade's voice was bitter, and his heart  
Ached at the thought that he could bring no aid.  
He seized his arm and pressed it in his grasp,  
For there the wound which Teucer's arrow left,  
When Glaucus stormed the wall and Teucer's shafts 640  
Defended it, still pained him grievously,  
And thus he prayed to Phœbus, archer-god:—  
"Give ear, O king! wherever thou abide

In the opulent realm of Lycia, or in Troy;  
For everywhere thou hearest those who cry 645  
To thee in sorrow, and great sorrow now  
Is on me. Grievous is the wound I bear;  
Sharp are the pains that pierce my hand; the blood  
Cannot be stanchèd; my very arm becomes  
A burden; I can wield the spear no more 650  
With a firm grasp, nor combat with the foe.  
A mighty chief—Sarpedon, son of Jove—  
Has perished, and the father came not nigh  
To aid his son. Yet come thou to my aid,  
O monarch-god! and heal this painful wound, 655  
And give me strength to rally to the fight  
The Lycian warriors, and myself contend  
Valiantly for the rescue of the dead.”

So prayed he: Phœbus hearkened, and at once  
Assuaged the pain, and stanchèd the purple blood 660  
In the deep wound, and filled his frame with strength.  
The warrior felt the change, rejoiced to know  
That with such friendly speed the mighty god  
Granted his prayer. And first he went among  
The Lycian chiefs, exhorting them to wage 665  
Fierce battle for Sarpedon. Then he sought,  
Walking with rapid strides, the Trojan chiefs,

Agenor, nobly born, Polydamas,  
The son of Panthoüs, Æneas next,  
And Hector mailed in brass. By him he stood, 670  
And thus accosted him with wingèd words:—

“O Hector, thou art careless of the fate  
Of thine allies, who for thy sake, afar  
From those they love, and from their native land,  
Pour out their lives; thou bringest them no aid. 675  
Sarpedon lies in death, the chief who led  
The bucklered Lycians, who with justice swayed  
The realm of Lycia, and defended it  
With valor. Him hath brazen Mars beneath  
The weapon of Patroclus smitten down. 680  
Come then, my friends, repulse we gallantly  
These Myrmidons; else will they bear away  
His armor and insult his corpse, to avenge  
The havoc we have made among the Greeks  
Who perished by our weapons at the fleet.” 685

He spake, and grief immitigable seized  
The Trojans; for the slain, though stranger-born,  
Had been a pillar of the realm of Troy,  
And many were the troops that followed him,  
And he was bravest of them all in war. 690

Then rushed the Trojans fiercely on the Greeks,

With Hector, sorrowing for Sarpedon's fall,  
Leading them on, while the bold-hearted chief  
Patroclus Menœtiades, aroused  
The courage of the Greeks. He thus addressed 695  
The warriors Ajax, eager like himself  
For combat: "Be it now your welcome task,  
O warriors Ajax, to drive back the foe;  
He who first sprang across the Grecian wall,  
Sarpedon, lies a corpse, and we must now 700  
Dishonor the dead chief, and strip from him  
His armor, and strike down with our good spears  
Whoever of his comrades shall resist."

He spake, and all were resolute to beat  
The enemy back; and when, on either side, 705  
Trojans and Lycians, Myrmidons and Greeks,  
Had put their phalanxes in firm array,  
They closed, with dreadful shouts and horrid clash  
Of arms, in fight around the dead, while Jove  
Drew o'er that deadly fray an awful veil 710  
Of darkness, that the struggle for the corpse  
Of his dear son might rage more furiously.  
The Trojans first drave back the dark-eyed Greeks,  
For one was in the onset smitten down,  
Not the least valiant of the Myrmidons, — 715

The son of brave Agacles, nobly born  
Epeigeus, who aforetime, when he ruled  
The populous Budeium, having slain  
A noble kinsman, fled a suppliant  
To Peleus and the silver-footed queen, 720  
Thetis, his consort, and by them was sent,  
With terrible Achilles, to the coast  
Of courser-breeding Ilium and the siege  
Of Troy. As now he stooped to seize the dead,  
Illustrious Hector smote him with a stone 725  
Upon the forehead, cleaving it in two  
In the strong helmet; headlong on the corse  
He fell, and cruel death crept over him.  
With grief Patroclus saw his comrade slain,  
And broke his way among the foremost ranks. 730  
As a swift hawk that chases through the air  
Starlings and daws, so didst thou dart among  
Trojans and Lycians, for thy wrath was roused,  
O knight Patroclus! by thy comrade's death.  
And now his hand struck Sthenelaüs down, 735  
The dear son of Ithæmenes; he flung  
A stone that crushed the sinews of the neck.  
Back drew illustrious Hector, and with him  
The warriors who were fighting in the van.

As far as one can send a javelin, 740  
When men contend in martial games, or meet  
Their deadly enemies in war, so far  
Withdrew the Trojans, and the Greeks pursued.  
The leader of the bucklered Lycian host,  
Glaucus, was first to turn against his foes. 745  
He slew the brave Bathycles, the dear son  
Of Chalcon, who in Hellas had his home,  
And was the richest of the Myrmidons.  
The Lycian, turning on him suddenly  
As he drew near pursuing, sent his spear 750  
Right through his breast, and with a clash he fell.  
Great was the sorrow of the Greeks to see  
That valiant warrior fall; the men of Troy  
Exulted, and pressed round him in a crowd.  
Nor lacking was the valor of the Greeks, 755  
Who met them manfully. Meriones  
Struck down a Trojan chief, Laogonus,  
Onetor's valiant son. His father stood  
Priest at the altar of Idæan Jove,  
And like a god was honored by the realm. 760  
Below the jaw and ear Meriones  
Smote him, and instantly the life forsook  
His limbs, and fearful darkness shrouded him.

Straight at Meriones Æneas aimed  
His brazen spear to smite him, as he came, 765  
Beneath his buckler; but the Greek beheld  
The weapon in the air, and, stooping low,  
Escaped it; over him it passed, and stood  
Fixed in the earth behind him, where its stem  
Trembled, for now the rapid steel had spent 770  
Its force. As thus it quivered in the ground,  
Æneas, who perceived that it had left  
His powerful hand in vain, was vexed, and said:  
“Had I but struck thee, dancer as thou art,  
Meriones, my spear had suddenly 775  
Ended thy dancing.” Then Meriones,  
The skilful spearman, answered: “Thou art brave,  
But thou wilt find it hard to overcome  
The might of all who gather to repulse  
Thy onset. Thou art mortal, and if I, 780  
Aiming at thee with my good spear, should pierce  
Thy bosom, valiant as thou art and proud  
Of thy strong arm, thy death would bring me praise,  
And send thy soul where gloomy Pluto dwells.”  
He spake; the brave Patroclus heard, and thus 785  
Rebuked him: “Why wilt thou, Meriones,  
With all thy valor, stand to make a speech.



The foe, my friend, will not be forced to leave  
The corpse by insults; some of them must die.  
In deeds the issue of a battle lies;  
Words are for counsel. Now is not the time  
To utter swelling phrases, but to fight."

790

He ended, and went on; the godlike man  
Followed his steps. As when from mountain dells  
Rises, and far is heard, a crashing sound  
Where woodmen fell the trees, such was the noise  
From those who fought on that wide plain,—the din  
Of brass, of leather, and of tough bull's-hide  
Smitten with swords and two-edged spears. No eye,  
Although of keenest sight, would then have known  
Noble Sarpedon, covered as he lay,  
From head to foot, with weapons, blood, and dust;  
And still the warriors thronged around the dead.  
As when in spring-time at the cattle-stalls  
Flies gather, humming, when the milk is drawn,  
Round the full pails, so swarmed around the corpse  
The combatants; nor once did Jove withdraw  
His bright eyes from the stubborn fray, but still  
Gazed, planning how Patroclus should be slain.  
Uncertain whether, in the desperate strife  
Over the great Sarpedon, to permit

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Illustrious Hector with his spear to lay  
The hero dead, and make his arms a spoil,  
Or spare him yet a while, to make the war  
More bloody. As he pondered, this seemed best: 815  
That the brave comrade of Achilles first  
Should put to flight the Trojans and their chief,  
Hector the brazen-mailed, pursuing them  
Toward Troy with slaughter. To this end he sent  
Into the heart of Hector panic fear, 820  
Who climbed his car and fled, and bade the rest  
Flee also, for he saw how Jove had weighed  
The fortunes of the day. Now none remained,  
Not even the gallant Lycians, when they saw  
Their monarch lying wounded to the heart 825  
Among a heap of slain; for Saturn's son  
In that day's strife had caused a multitude  
To fall in death. Now when the Greeks had stripped  
Sarpedon of the glittering brazen mail,  
The brave son of Menœtius bade his friends 830  
Convey it to the hollow ships. Meanwhile  
The Cloud-compeller spake to Phœbus thus:—  
“Go now, beloved Phœbus, and withdraw  
Sarpedon from the weapons of the foe; 834  
Cleanse him from the dark blood, and bear him thence,

And lave him in the river-stream, and shed  
Ambrosia o'er him. Clothe him then in robes  
Of heaven, consigning him to Sleep and Death,  
Twin brothers, and swift bearers of the dead,  
And they shall lay him down in Lycia's fields, 840  
That broad and opulent realm. There shall his friends  
And kinsmen give him burial, and shall rear  
His tomb and column,—honors due the dead."

He spake: Apollo instantly obeyed  
His father, leaving Ida's mountain height, 845  
And sought the field of battle, and bore off  
Noble Sarpedon from the enemy's spears,  
And laved him in the river-stream, and shed  
Ambrosia o'er him. Then in robes of heaven  
He clothed him, giving him to Sleep and Death, 850  
Twin brothers and swift bearers of the dead,  
And they, with speed conveying it, laid down  
The corpse in Lycia's broad and opulent realm.

Meantime Patroclus, urging on his steeds  
And charioteer, pursued, to his own hurt, 855  
Trojans and Lycians. Madman! had he then  
Obeyed the counsel which Pelides gave,  
The bitter doom of death had not been his.  
But stronger than the purposes of men

Are those of Jove, who puts to flight the brave, 860  
And takes from them the victory, though he  
Impelled them to the battle; and he now  
Urged on Patroclus to prolong the fight.

Who first, when thus the gods decreed thy death,  
Fell by thy hand, Patroclus, and who last? 865  
Adrastus first, Autonoüs next, and then  
Echeclus; then died Perimus, the son  
Of Meges; then with Melanippus fell  
Epistor; next was Elarus o'ercome,  
And Mulius, and Pylartes. These he slew, 870  
While all the rest betook themselves to flight.

Then had the Greeks possessed themselves of Troy,  
With all its lofty portals, by the hand  
And valor of Patroclus, for his rage  
Was terrible beyond the rage of all 875  
Who bore the spear, had not Apollo stood  
On a strong tower to menace him with ill,  
And aid the Trojans. Thrice Patroclus climbed  
A shoulder of the lofty wall, and thrice  
- Apollo, striking his immortal hands 880  
Against the glittering buckler, thrust him down;  
And when, for the fourth time, the godlike man  
Essay'd to mount the wall, the archer-god,

Phœbus, encountered him with fearful threats:

“Noble Patroclus, hold thy hand, nor deem 885

The city of the warlike Trojans doomed

To fall beneath thy spear, nor by the arm

Of Peleus' son, though mightier far than thou.”

He spake; Patroclus, fearful of the wrath

Of the archer-god, withdrew, and stood afar, 890

While Hector, at the Scæan gates, restrained

His coursers, doubtful whether to renew

The fight by mingling with the crowd again,

Or gather all his host within the walls

By a loud summons. As he pondered thus, 895

Apollo stood beside him in the form

Of Asius, a young warrior and a brave,

Uncle of Hector, the great horse-tamer,

And brother of Queen Hecuba, and son

Of Dymas, who in Phrygia dwelt beside 900

The streams of the Sangarius. Putting on

His shape and aspect, thus Apollo said:—

“Why, Hector, dost thou pause from battle thus?

Nay, it becomes thee not. Were I in might

Greater than thou, as I am less, full soon 905

Wouldst thou repent this shrinking from the war.

Come boldly on, and urge thy firm-paced steeds

Against Patroclus; slay him on the field,  
And Phœbus will requite thee with renown."

He spake, and mingled in the hard-fought fray, 910  
While noble Hector bade his charioteer,  
The brave Cebriones, ply well the lash,  
And join the battle. Phœbus went before,  
Entering the crowd, and spread dismay among  
The Greeks, and gave the glory of the hour 915  
To Hector and the Trojans. Little heed  
Paid Hector to the rest, nor raised his arm  
To slay them, but urged on his firm-paced steeds  
To meet Patroclus, who, beholding him,  
Leaped from his car. In his left hand he held 920  
A spear, and with the other lifting up  
A white, rough stone, the largest he could grasp,  
Flung it with all its force. It flew not wide,  
Nor flew in vain, but smote Cebriones,  
The warlike chief who guided Hector's steeds, 925  
A spurious son of Priam the renowned.  
The sharp stone smote his forehead as he held  
The reins, and crushed both eyebrows in; the bone  
Resisted not the blow; the warrior's eyes  
Fell in the dust before his very feet.  
Down from the sumptuous seat he plunged, as dives

A swimmer, and the life forsook his limbs.

And this, Patroclus, was thy cruel jest:—

“Truly a nimble man is this who dives  
 With such expertness. Were this, now, the sea, 935  
 Where fish are bred, and he were searching it  
 For oysters, he might get an ample store  
 For many men, in leaping from a ship,  
 Though in a storm, so skilfully he dives  
 Even from the chariot to the plain. No doubt 940  
 There must be divers in the town of Troy.”

He spake, and sprang upon Cebriones.  
 With all a lion's fury, which attacks  
 The stables and is wounded in the breast,  
 And perishes through his own daring; thus, 945  
 Patroclus, didst thou fall upon the slain,  
 While Hector, hastening also, left his steeds,  
 And both contended for Cebriones.  
 As lions for the carcass of a deer  
 Fight on a mountain summit, hungry both, 950  
 And both unyielding, thus two mighty men  
 Of war, Patroclus Menœtiades  
 And glorious Hector, eager each to smite  
 His adversary with the cruel spear,  
 Fought for Cebriones. The slain man's head 955

Was seized by Hector's powerful hand, whose grasp  
Relaxed not, while Patroclus held the foot;  
And, thronging to the spot, the other Greeks  
And Trojans mingled in the desperate strife.

As when the east wind and the south contend 960  
In the open mountain grounds, and furiously  
Assail the deep old woods of beech and ash  
And barky cornel, flinging their long boughs  
Against each other with a mighty roar,  
And crash of those that break, so did the Greeks 965  
And Trojans meet with mutual blows, and slay  
Each other; nor had either host a thought  
Of shameful flight. Full many a trenchant spear  
Went to its mark beside Cebriones,  
And many a wingèd arrow that had left 970  
The bowstring; many a massive stone was hurled  
Against the ringing bucklers, as they fought  
Around the dead, while he, the mighty, lay  
Stretched on the ground amid the eddying dust,  
Forgetful of his art of horsemanship. 975

While yet the sun was climbing to his place  
In middle heaven, the men of either host  
Were smitten by the weapons, and in both  
The people fell; but when he stooped to the west



The Greeks prevailed, and from that storm of darts 980  
And tumult of the Trojans they drew forth  
Cebriones, and stripped him of his arms.

Still rushed Patroclus onward, bent to wreak  
His fury on the Trojans. Fierce as Mars,  
He charged their squadrons thrice with fearful shouts, 985  
And thrice he laid nine warriors in the dust.

But as with godlike energy he made  
The fourth assault, then clearly was it seen,  
Patroclus, that thy life was near its end,  
For Phœbus terribly in that fierce strife 990

Encountered thee. Patroclus saw him not  
Advancing in the tumult, for he moved  
Unseen in darkness. Coming close behind,  
He smote, with open palm, the hero's back  
Between the ample shoulders, and his eyes 995

Reeled with the blow, while Phœbus from his head  
Struck the tall helm, that, clanking, rolled away  
Under the horses' feet; its crest was soiled  
With blood and dust, though never till that hour  
Had dust defiled its horse-hair plume; for once 1000  
That helmet guarded an illustrious head,  
The glorious brows of Peleus' son, and now  
Jove destined it for Hector, to be worn

In battle; and his death was also near.

The spear Patroclus wielded, edged with brass, 1005

Long, tough, and huge, was broken in his hands;

And his broad buckler, dropping with its band,

Lay on the ground, while Phœbus, son of Jove,

Undid the fastenings of his mail. With mind

Bewildered, and with powerless limbs, he stood 1010

As thunderstruck. Then a Dardanian named

Euphorbus, son of Panthoûs, who excelled

His comrades in the wielding of the spear,

The race, and horsemanship, approaching, smote

Patroclus in the back with his keen spear, 1015

Between the shoulder-blades. Already he

Had dashed down twenty warriors from their cars,

Guiding his own, a learner in the art

Of war. The first was he who threw a lance

At thee, Patroclus, yet o'ercame thee not; 1020

For, plucking from thy back its ashen stem,

He fled, and mingled with the crowd, nor dared

Await thy coming, though thou wert unarmed,

While, weakened by that wound and by the blow

Given by the god, Patroclus turned and sought 1025

Shelter from danger in the Grecian ranks;

But Hector, when he saw the gallant Greek

Thus wounded and retreating, left his place  
Among the squadrons, and, advancing, pierced  
Patroclus with his spear, below the belt, 1030  
Driving the weapon deep. The hero fell  
With clashing mail, and all the Greeks beheld  
His fall with grief. As when a lion bears  
A stubborn boar to earth, what time the twain  
Fight on the mountains for a slender spring, 1035  
Both thirsty and both fierce, the lion's strength  
Lays prone his panting foe, so Priam's son  
Slew, fighting hand to hand, the valiant Greek,  
Son of Menœtius, who himself had slain  
So many. Hector gloried over him 1040  
With wingèd words: "Patroclus, thou didst think  
To lay our city waste, and carry off  
Our women captive in thy ships to Greece.  
Madman! in their defence the fiery steeds  
Of Hector sweep the battle-field, and I, 1045  
Mightiest of all the Trojans, with the spear  
Will guard them from the doom of slavery.  
Now vultures shall devour thee, wretched youth!  
Achilles, mighty though he be, has brought  
No help to thee, though doubtless when he sent 1050  
Thee forth to battle, and remained within,

He charged thee thus: 'Patroclus, flower of knights,  
Return not to the fleet until thy hand  
Hath torn the bloody armor from the corpse  
Of the man-queller Hector.' So he spake, 1055  
And filled with idle hopes thy foolish heart."

Then thou, Patroclus, with a faltering voice,  
Didst answer thus: "Now, Hector, while thou mayst,  
Utter thy boast in swelling words, since Jove  
And Phœbus gave the victory to thee. 1060  
Easily have they vanquished me; 't was they  
Who stripped the armor from my limbs, for else,  
If twenty such as thou had met me, all  
Had perished by my spear. A cruel fate  
O'ertakes me, aided by Latona's son, 1065  
The god, and by Euphorbus among men.  
Thou who shalt take my spoil art but the third;  
Yet hear my words, and keep them in thy thought.  
Not long shalt thou remain alive; thy death  
By violence is at hand, and thou must fall, 1070  
Slain by the hand of great Æacides."

While he was speaking, death stole over him  
And veiled his senses, while the soul forsook  
His limbs and flew to Hades, sorrowing  
For its sad lot, to part from life in youth 1075

And prime of strength. Illustrious Hector thus  
Answered the dying man: "Why threaten me,  
Patroclus, with an early death? Who knows  
That he, thy friend, whom fair-haired Thetis bore  
Achilles, may not sooner lose his life,  
Slain by my spear?" He spake, and set his heel  
Upon the slain, and from the wound drew forth  
His brazen spear and pushed the corpse aside,  
And with the weapon hurried on to smite  
Godlike Automedon, the charioteer  
Of swift Æacides; but him the steeds  
Fleet-footed and immortal, which the gods  
Bestowed on Peleus, swiftly bore away.

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1085

*BOOK XVII.*

**T**HE warlike Menelaus, Atreus' son,  
Beheld Patroclus fall by Trojan hands,  
And came in glittering armor to the van  
To guard the body of the slain. As walks  
A heifer moaning round her new-born young,       8  
So fair-haired Menelaus stalked around  
The body of Patroclus, holding forth  
His spear and great round shield, intent to slay  
Whoever came against him. But the son  
Of Panthoüs, mighty spearman, not the less       10  
Intent to spoil the illustrious dead, drew near,  
And spake to warlike Menelaus thus:—  
    “Atrides Menelaus, reared by Jove,  
And leader of thy host, give way and leave  
The dead, and quit to me his bloody spoil;       15  
For none of our brave Trojans and allies  
Smote him in deadly combat with the spear,  
Before me. Leave me therefore to receive

The glory due me from the sons of Troy,  
Else will I smite thee too, and thou wilt lose  
Thy precious life!" Indignant at the word,  
The fair-haired Menelaus answered him;—

    "O Father Jove! unseemly boasts are these!  
For not the panther's nor the lion's might,  
Nor that of the fierce forest-boar whose rage  
Is heightened into fury, is as great  
As that which these distinguished spearmen, sons  
Of Panthoüs, utter with their lips. And yet  
The horseman Hyperenor did not long  
Enjoy his youth when he with insolent words  
Assailed me, and withstood me,—when he said  
That I was the most craven wretch who bore  
Arms in the Grecian host. He never turned,  
I think, his footsteps homeward to delight  
His reverend parents and beloved wife;  
And I, like his, will take thy life, if thou  
Oppose me. Heed my counsel, and withdraw  
Among the crowd, and so avoid my stroke  
Before thou come to harm. He is a fool  
Who only sees the mischiefs that are past."

He said: Euphorbus, heeding not his words  
Of warning, spake again: "Now is my time,

Jove-nurtured Menelaus, to avenge  
My brother, slain by thee, and over whom  
Thou utterdest such swelling words, whose wife 45  
In her new bridal chamber thou hast made  
A widow, and upon her parents brought  
Mourning and endless sorrow. It may make  
The sorrow less, should I into the hands  
Of Panthoüs and the noble Phrontis give 50  
Thy head and armor. Let us now delay  
The strife no longer: it will show with whom  
The valor dwells, and who is moved by fear."

He spake, and smote his enemy's round shield,  
But pierced it not; the stubborn metal turned 55  
The weapon's point. Then Menelaus, son  
Of Atreus, with a prayer to Jupiter,  
Struck, as Euphorbus made a backward step,  
His throat, and drave the weapon with strong hand  
Through the soft neck. He fell with clashing arms. 60  
His locks, which were like those the Graces wear,  
And ringlets, bound with gold and silver bands,  
Were drenched with blood. As when some husbandman  
Rears in a lonely and well-watered spot  
An olive-tree with widely spreading boughs, 65  
Beautiful with fresh shoots, and putting forth



White blossoms, gently waved by every wind,  
A sudden blast descends with mighty sweep  
And tears it from its bed, and lays it prone  
Upon the earth,—so lay Euphorbus, skilled 70  
To wield the spear and son of Panthoüs, slain  
And spoiled by Menelaus, Atreus' son.  
As when a lion of the mountain wilds,  
Fearless and strong, bears from the browsing herd  
The fairest of the kine, and breaks her neck 75  
With his strong teeth, and, tearing her, devours  
The bloody entrails, while a clamorous throng  
Of dogs and herdsmen, with incessant cries,  
Gather around him, yet approach him not,  
Withheld by fear, so of the warriors round 80  
The gallant Menelaus none could find  
The courage to encounter him; and then  
Atrides easily had borne away  
The sumptuous armor worn by Panthoüs' son,  
If envious Apollo had not moved 85  
Hector to meet him. Putting on the form  
Of Mentès, chief of the Ciconian band,  
He said to him aloud, with wingèd words:—  
“Hector, thou art pursuing what thy feet  
Will never overtake, the steeds which draw 90

The chariot of Achilles. Hard it were  
For mortal man to tame them or to guide,  
Save for Achilles, goddess-born. Meanwhile  
Hath warlike Menelaus, Atreus' son,  
Guarding the slain Patroclus, overthrown  
Euphorbus, bravest of the Trojan host,  
A son of Panthoüs; he will fight no more."

95

Thus spake the god, and disappeared among  
The warring squadrons. Bitter was the grief  
That seized the heart of Hector as he looked  
Along the ranks and saw the Greek bear off  
The sumptuous arms, and saw the Trojan lie  
Weltering in blood. At once he made his way  
To the front rank, all armed in glittering brass,  
And with loud shouts. As terrible he came  
As Vulcan's inextinguishable fires.

100

105

The son of Atreus heard that mighty shout,  
And thus to his great soul lamenting said:—

"If I abandon these rich spoils and leave  
Patroclus, who has perished in my cause,  
I fear the Greeks will look upon the act  
With indignation. If, through dread of shame,  
I fight alone with Hector and his men,  
I fear to be o'erwhelmed by multitudes,

110

For crested Hector leads the whole array 115  
Of Trojans hither. Yet why question thus ?  
For when a warrior ventures to assault  
One whom a god protects, a bitter doom  
Is his. Then none of all the Greeks should blame  
If I give way to Hector, whom a god 120  
Hath sent against me. Yet could I but hear  
The voice of mighty Ajax, we would both  
Return, and even against a god renew  
The combat, that we haply might restore  
Patroclus to Achilles, Peleus' son. 125  
Such in this choice of evils were the least."

As thus he mused, the men of Troy came on,  
With Hector at their head. The Greek gave way  
And left the slain. As when a lion, driven  
With pikes and clamor from the herdsman's stalls 130  
By men and dogs, unwillingly retreats,  
His valiant heart still raging in his breast,  
So did the fair-haired Menelaus leave  
Patroclus. When he reached the Grecian ranks,  
He turned and stood and looked about to find 135  
The mighty Ajax, son of Telamon,  
And him he soon beheld on the left edge  
Of battle, rallying there and heartening

His men; for Phœbus from above had sent  
A panic fear among them. To him then 140  
The son of Atreus went in haste and said: —

“Ajax, my friend, come hither where we fight  
Around Patroclus. Let us strive at least  
To bring Achilles back the hero's corpse,  
Though stripped; for crested Hector hath his arms.” 145

He spake; the courage of the warlike son  
Of Telamon was kindled by his words.  
To the front rank he hastened, and with him  
Went fair-haired Menelaus. Hector there  
Had spoiled Patroclus of his glorious arms, 150  
And now was dragging him apart to hew  
The head away with his keen sword, and give  
The body to the dogs of Troy. Just then  
Came Ajax, bearing, like a tower, his shield,  
And Hector mingled with the Trojan ranks, 155  
And leaped into his car; but first he gave  
His friends the glittering spoil to bear away  
To Troy,—a glory to the conqueror;  
While Ajax, over Menœtiades  
Holding his ample shield, stood firm as stands 160  
A lion o'er his whelps, when, as he comes  
Leading them through the wood, the hunters rush

Upon him, and his look is terrible  
As his knit eyebrows cover his fierce eyes.  
So Ajax moved around the hero's corpse, 165  
While warlike Menelaus by his side,  
The son of Atreus, stood in bitter grief.  
Then, with a look of anger, Glaucus spake—  
Son of Hippolochus, and chief among  
The Lycians—thus to Hector: "Though thy form, 170  
Hector, be noble, yet in prowess thou  
Art wanting, and thy fame in feats of war  
Is not deserved, since thou dost fly the foe.  
Think whether thou alone, with others born  
In Troy, canst save the city and the state. 175  
For henceforth will no Lycian fight for Troy  
Against the Greeks; this conflict without end  
Has never earned them thanks. Inglorious chief!  
How wilt thou be the shield of humbler men,  
If thou canst leave Sarpedon, who has been 180  
Thy comrade and thy guest, to be the prey  
And spoil of the Greek warriors? While he lived,  
Great was the aid he brought thy cause and thee,  
And now thou dost not seek to drive away  
The dogs from his neglected corpse. For this, 185  
If any of the Lycians heed my words,

They will go home, and imminent will be  
The ruin of thy city. If that firm  
And resolute valor lived in Trojan hearts  
Which they should cherish who in the defence 190  
Of their own country bear the toils and face  
The dangers of the field, we might this hour  
Drag off the slain Patroclus into Troy.  
And should we bear him from the thick of fight  
To the great city of Priam, soon the Greeks 195  
Would let us ransom the rich armor worn  
By our Sarpedon, and bring back his corpse;  
For he lies slain who was the bosom friend  
Of the most valiant chieftain at the fleet  
Of Greece, and leader of her bravest men. 200  
But thou, when great-souled Ajax fixed his eye  
Upon thee, didst not venture to remain  
And fight with him; he is more brave than thou.”  
The crested Hector frowned and thus replied:—  
“Why, Glaucus, should a warrior such as thou 205  
Utter such violent words? My friend, I deemed  
That thou wert wise above all other men  
Of fertile Lycia, but I now must blame  
Thy judgment when thou say’st I shrink to meet  
The mighty Ajax. I do neither dread 210

The battle's fury nor the rush of steeds;  
But all-prevailing are the purposes  
Of ægis-bearing Jove, who makes the brave  
To flee, and takes from him the victory,  
And then again impels him to the fight. 215  
Come then, my friend, stand by me; see if I  
Skulk this time from the conflict, as thou say'st,  
Or tame the courage of whatever Greek,  
The bravest, who defends Patroclus slain."

He spake, and, shouting, cheered the Trojans on: 220  
"Trojans and Lycians and Dardanians, trained  
To combat hand to hand, let it be seen,  
My friends, that ye are men, and still retain  
Your ancient valor; while I buckle on  
The glorious armor of the illustrious son 225  
Of Peleus, taken from Patroclus slain."

So spake the crested Hector, and withdrew  
From the fierce conflict, and with rapid steps  
O'ertook his comrades as they bore away  
Townward the glorious arms of Peleus' son. 230  
There from that deadly strife apart he stood,  
And changed his coat of mail. He gave his own  
To his companions, to be carried thence  
To sacred Ilium, and he buckled on

The immortal armor of Achilles, son  
Of Peleus, which the gods of heaven bestowed  
Upon his father, who in his old age  
Consigned them to Achilles; but the son  
Was never in that armor to grow old. 235

And when the Cloud-compeller Jove beheld  
Hector apart, accoutred in the arms  
Of Peleus' godlike son, he shook his head,  
And to himself he said: "Unhappy man!  
Death even now is near to thee, and yet  
Is not in all thy thoughts. Thou puttest on 245  
The heavenly armor of the terrible chief,  
Before whom others tremble; thou hast slain  
His friend, the brave and gentle, and hast stripped,  
To do him shame, the armor from his limbs.  
Yet will I for the moment give to thee 250  
Fresh triumphs, since Andromache shall ne'er  
Receive, when thou returnest from the field,  
The armor of Pelides from thy hands."

The son of Saturn spake, and gave the nod  
With his dark brows. Well did that coat of mail 255  
Suit Hector's form. Meantime the god of war  
In all his fierceness entered Hector's breast:  
Fresh vigor filled and nerved his frame; he went



Along the ranks of his renowned allies  
With shouts; that glittering armor made him seem 260  
The large-souled son of Peleus. To them all  
He spake in turn, encouraging their hearts,—  
To Mesthles, Glaucus, and Thersilochus,  
Medon, Deisenor, and Hippothoüs,  
Asteropæus, Phorcys, Chromius, 265  
And Ennomus the Augur; these the chief  
Exhorted to the fight with wingèd words:—  
“Hear me, ye mighty throng of our allies,  
Dwellers of nations round us! Not to make  
Our army vast in numbers did I send 270  
To summon you, each from his native town,  
But that your willing valor might defend  
The wives and children of the sons of Troy  
From the assailing Greeks. I therefore give  
Most freely of our substance in large gifts 275  
And banquets, that ye all may be content;  
And now let some of you move boldly on  
To do or die, which is the chance of war.  
To him who from the field will drag and bring  
The slain Patroclus to the Trojan knights, 280  
Compelling Ajax to give way,—to him  
I yield up half the spoil; the other half

I keep, and let his glory equal mine."

He spake, and all that mighty multitude  
With lifted lances threw themselves against 285  
The Grecian ranks. They hoped to bear away  
The dead from Ajax, son of Telamon.  
Ah, idle hope! that hero o'er the dead  
Took many a Trojan's life. Then Ajax thus  
To Menelaus, great in battle, spake:— 290

"O friend, O Menelaus, reared by Jove,  
No longer now I hope our safe return  
From battle. Not the greatest of my fears  
Is for Patroclus, whom the dogs of Troy  
And birds of prey full quickly will devour, 295  
But for my life and thine. That cloud of war,  
Hector, o'ershadows all, and over us  
Impends the doom of death. Yet let us call  
Our mighty men, if they perchance may hear."

He spake, and Menelaus, great in war, 300  
Obeyed his wish and shouted to the Greeks:—

"O friends, the princes and the chiefs of Greece,  
Who at the public feasts with Atreus' sons—  
King Agamemnon and his brother chief—  
Drink wine,—who each command a host, and hold 305  
Your honors and your state from Jove,—my eyes

Cannot discern you in the thick of fight;  
But some of you, who cannot bear to leave  
Patroclus to the dogs of Troy, draw near!"

He spake; Oïlean Ajax, swift of foot, 310  
Heard and came forward, hastening through the fight;  
And after him Idomeneus, who brought  
Meriones, his armor-bearer, fierce  
As the man-slayer Mars. But who could tell  
The names of all the other Greeks that sprang 315  
To mingle in the strife? The Trojans made  
The first assault, and Hector led them on.

As at the mouth of some great river, swoln  
By rains from Jove, the mighty ocean-wave  
Meets it with roaring, and the cliffs around 320  
Rebellow, while the surges toss without,  
With such a clamor came the Trojans on,  
While round Patroclus closed, with one accord,  
The Greeks, protected by their brazen shields,  
And o'er their shining helmets Saturn's son 325  
Poured darkness. For when Menœtiades  
Yet lived, attendant upon Peleus' son,  
Jove looked on him with no unkind regard,  
And now he would not that his corse should feed  
The enemy's dogs, and therefore moved his friends 330

To rescue him. At first the Trojans drave  
The dark-eyed Greeks before them; back they fell  
And left the dead; yet, fiercely as they came,  
The Trojans slew no man, but dragged away  
The dead. A moment, and no more, the Greeks 335  
Fell back; for Ajax quickly rallied them,—  
Ajax, who, next to Peleus' valiant son,  
Excelled them all in form and feats of war;  
He through the foremost warriors brake, as strong  
As a wild boar that on the mountain's side 340  
Breaks through the shrubs, and scatters with a bound  
A band of youths and dogs. The illustrious son  
Of honored Telamon thus put to rout  
The Trojan phalanxes environing  
Patroclus, in the hope to bear him thence 345  
Townward with glory. There Hippothoüs, son  
Of Lethus the Pelasgian, having bound  
A thong about the sinewy ankle, toiled  
To drag away the slain man by the foot  
From that fierce strife,—a grateful spectacle 350  
To Hector and the Trojans. Yet on him  
A vengeance which no friendly arm could ward  
Fell suddenly. The son of Telamon  
Rushed through the crowd, and in close combat smote

His helmet's brazen cheek. That plumèd helm 355  
Was cleft by the huge spear and vigorous hand,  
And where the weapon struck Hippothoüs,  
Mingled with blood the brain gushed forth; the life  
Forsook his limbs; he dropped from nerveless hands  
The foot of brave Patroclus, and beside 360  
The corpse fell headlong, — far from the rich fields  
Of his Larissa, never to repay  
With gentle cares in their old age the love  
Of his dear parents; for his life was short,  
Slain by the spear of Ajax, large of soul. 365

Then Hector aimed again his shining spear  
At Ajax, who perceived it as it came,  
And just avoided it. The weapon struck  
Schedius, the valiant son of Iphitus,  
And bravest of the Phocians, whose abode 370  
Was Panopeus the famous, where he ruled  
O'er many men. Beneath the collar-bone  
It pierced him, and passed through; the brazen point  
Came out upon the shoulder; to the ground  
He fell, his armor clashing with his fall. 375  
Then Ajax smote the valiant Phorcys, son  
Of Phœnops, in the navel. Through the mail  
The brazen weapon broke, and roughly tore

The entrails. In the dust he fell, and clenched  
 The earth with dying hands. The foremost ranks, 380  
 Led by illustrious Hector, at the sight  
 Yielded the ground; the Greeks with fearful shouts  
 Dragged off the bodies of Hippothous  
 And Phorcys, and despoiled them of their arms.

Then would the Trojans have been put to flight 385  
 Before the warlike Greeks, and, craven-like,  
 Gone up to Troy, and great had been the fame  
 Gained by the might and courage of the Greeks,  
 Beyond what Jupiter designed to give,  
 Had not Apollo brought Æneas forth 390  
 By putting on the form of Periphas,  
 The herald and the son of Epytus,  
 Who in that office as a prudent friend  
 And counsellor had served, till he grew old,  
 The father of Æneas. In his shape 395  
 Thus spake Apollo, son of Jupiter:—

“Æneas, ye might even hold the towers  
 Of lofty Ilium safe against a god,  
 Were ye to act as some whom I have seen,—  
 Valiant, and confident in their own might 400  
 And multitude of dauntless followers.  
 And now Jove favors us and offers us

The victory o'er the Greeks, and yet ye flee  
In abject terror, and refuse to fight."

He spake; Æneas, looking at him, knew 405  
The archer-god, and with a mighty voice  
Called out to Hector: "Hector! thou and all  
Who lead the troops of Troy, and our allies,  
Great shame it were if we were put to rout  
Before the warlike Greeks, and beaten back 410  
To Troy like cowards. Standing by my side,  
One of the gods already hath declared  
That Jupiter, All-wise, is our ally  
In battle. Let us therefore boldly fall  
Upon the Greeks, nor suffer them to bear 415  
Patroclus unmolested to their fleet."

He spake, and, springing to the foremost ranks,  
Stood firm; the Trojans also turned and faced  
The Achaians. Then Æneas with his spear 420  
Struck down Leocritus, the gallant friend  
Of Lycomedes and Arisbas' son.  
The warlike Lycomedes saw his fall  
With grief, and came and cast his shining spear  
At Apisaon, son of Hippasus,  
A shepherd of the people. Underneath 425  
The midriff, through the liver went the spear,

And he fell lifeless. He had come to Troy  
From rich Pæonia, and was great in war,  
Next to Asteropæus. As he saw  
His comrade fall, Asteropæus, moved 430  
By grief, advanced to combat with the Greeks,  
But could not; for the group that stood around  
Patroclus showed a fence of shields, and held  
Their spears before them. Ajax moved among  
The warriors, charging them that none should leave 435  
The corpse, and none should step beyond the rest  
To strike the foe, but stay to guard the dead,  
And combat hand to hand. Such was the charge  
Of mighty Ajax. All the earth around  
Was steeped with blood, and many a corpse was heaped 440  
On corpse of Trojans and their brave allies,  
And of the Greeks, for even on their side  
The strife was not unbloody, though of Greeks  
There perished fewer; each was on the watch  
To ward the battle's dangers from the rest. 445  
Then did they fight like fire. You could not say  
The sun was safe, nor yet the moon, so thick  
A darkness gathered over the brave men  
Around the corpse of Menœtiades.  
The other Trojans and the well-armed Greeks 450



Fought freely under the clear sky; the sun  
Shed o'er them his full brightness; not a cloud  
Shadowed the earth, or rested on the hills.  
From time to time they paused, and warily  
They shunned each other's cruel darts, and kept 455  
Far from each other, while in the mid-war  
Struggled the combatants in darkness, galled  
By the remorseless weapons of their foes.  
Yet Thrasymedes and Antilochus,  
Two famous Grecian warriors, had not learned 460  
That excellent Patroclus was no more,  
But thought that, still alive, he led the war  
Against the Trojans, fighting in the van.  
They watched the flight and slaughter of the Greeks,  
And fought apart, for Nestor so enjoined, 465  
Who sent them to the battle from the fleet.  
But they who held the middle space around  
The friend of swift Æacides, maintained  
A desperate strife all day; the knees, the thighs,  
The feet, the hands, the eyes of those who fought 470  
Were faint with weariness and foul with sweat.  
As when an ample ox-hide, steeped in fat,  
Is given to workmen to be stretched, they stand  
Around it in a circle, pulling it,

Till forth the moisture issues, and the oil  
Enters the skin, and by that constant strain  
From many hands the hide is duly stretched,  
So in small space the warriors drew the dead  
Hither and thither; they of Ilium strove  
To drag it to the city, they of Greece  
To bear it to the fleet. The tumult then  
Was terrible, and neither Mars himself,  
The musterer of hosts, nor Pallas, roused  
To her intensest wrath, had they been near  
The struggle, would have seen it with disdain.  
Such deadly strife of steeds and men was held  
O'er slain Patroclus by the will of Jove.

The great Achilles knew not yet the fate  
Of his Patroclus, for the warriors fought  
Far from the fleet, beside the wall of Troy.  
He never thought of him as one whose death  
Was near, but trusted that, when once he reached  
The Trojan wall, he would return alive;  
Nor ever deemed he that without his aid,  
Or even with it, would Patroclus sack  
The city. This was what he oft had heard  
From Thetis, who disclosed to him apart  
The counsel of Almighty Jupiter.

Yet had his mother never once revealed  
The present evil, — that the one whom most 500  
He loved of all his friends should perish thus.

Still round the dead they fought with their keen spears,  
And slew each other. Then of the mailed Greeks  
Some one would say: "O friends, it were disgrace  
Should we fall back upon our roomy ships. 505  
First let the dark earth swallow us; for this  
Were better than to let the Trojan knights  
Drag off the dead in triumph to their town."

And some among the large-souled sons of Troy  
Would say: "O friends, though all of us should fall 510  
Beside this corpse, let no one turn and flee."  
Thus they, encouraging each other, spake,  
And thus the fight went on. The iron din  
Rose through the waste air to the brazen heaven.

Meantime aloof from battle stood the steeds 515  
Of Peleus' son, and sorrowed when they knew  
That he who guided them lay stretched in dust  
By Hector's slaughtering hand. Automedon,  
The brave son of Dioreas, often tried  
The lash, and gentle words as oft, and oft 520  
Shouted forth threats; yet neither would they move  
Toward the broad Hellespont, where lay the fleet,

Nor toward the Greeks in combat, but remained  
Motionless as a funeral column, reared  
To mark a man's or woman's tomb. So stood 525  
The coursers yoked to that magnificent car,  
With drooping heads, and tears that from their lids  
Flowed hot, for sorrow at the loss of him  
Who was their charioteer, and their fair manes,  
Sweeping the yoke below, were foul with dust. 530  
The son of Saturn saw their grief, and shook  
His head in pity, saying to himself: —  
    “Why did the gods bestow you, luckless pair,  
On Peleus, — on a king of mortal birth, —  
You who shall never feel old age or death? 535  
Was it that ye might share with human-kind  
Their sorrows? for the race of mortal men  
Of all that breathe and move upon the earth  
Is the most wretched. Yet of this be sure, —  
That ye shall never in that sumptuous car 540  
Bear Hector. Is it not enough that he  
Should wear that armor, uttering idle boasts?  
And now will I infuse into your limbs  
Spirit and strength, that ye may safely bear  
Automedon across the battle-field 545  
To where the roomy galleys lie. I yet

Must give more glory to the men of Troy,  
And they must slay until they come again  
To the good ships of Greece,—until the sun  
Goes down and sacred darkness covers all.” 550

So spake the god, and breathed into the steeds  
New life and vigor. From their manes they shook  
The dust, and flew with that swift car among  
The Greeks and Trojans. With the Trojan throng,  
Automedon, though mourning his slain friend, 555  
Maintained the fight; he rushed upon their ranks,  
A vulture pouncing on a flock of geese.

Swiftly he passed from out the Trojan throng;  
Swiftly again he charged their phalanxes  
In fierce pursuit. Yet slew he none of those 560  
Whom he pursued; he could not guide at once  
The steeds and cast the spear, when seated thus  
Alone within that sacred car. At last  
A friend, the valorous Alcimedon,  
Laërces' son, of Æmon's line, beheld 565  
His plight, and, standing near his chariot, said:—

“What god, Automedon, hath prompted thee  
To these mad acts, and stolen thy better sense,  
Fighting alone among the foremost ranks  
Of Trojan warriors, thy companion slain, 570

And Hector in the field, who boastfully  
Stalks in the armor of Æacides?"

And thus Automedon, Diores' son,  
Made answer: "Who is there among the Greeks  
Able like thee, Alcimedon, to rein 575  
And curb the spirit of immortal steeds?  
None were there save Patroclus while he lived,  
Wise as a god in council. Death and fate  
Now hold him. To thy hand I give the lash  
And shining reins, while I descend and fight." 580

He spake, and into his swift chariot sprang  
Alcimedon, and took the lash and reins.  
Automedon leaped down. As Hector saw,  
He thus bespake Æneas at his side: —

"Æneas, leader of the men of Troy, 585  
Equipped in brazen armor, I have seen  
Those coursers of the swift Æacides  
Driven through the battle by unwarlike hands,  
And 'tis my hope, if thou wilt give thine aid,  
To seize them. They who guide them will not dare 590  
To stand and face us when we make the charge."

He spake; Anchises' valiant son complied,  
And, sheltered by their shields of tough ox-hide,  
Well dried and firm, and strong with plates of brass,

The twain went forward. With them at their side 595  
Went Chromius and Aretus, nobly formed,  
In hope to lead away the high-necked steeds,  
Their guardians slain. Vain dreamers! they were doomed  
Not without bloody penance to return  
From that encounter with Automedon, 600  
Who prayed to Father Jove, and whose faint heart  
Was strengthened and made bold. And thus the chief  
Said to his faithful friend Alcimedon:—

“Keep not the steeds thou guidest far from me,  
Alcimedon, but let them ever breathe 605  
Upon my shoulders. Hector, Priam’s son,  
I think, will not give over this assault  
Before he either slays us, and ascends  
The car to which these steeds with flowing manes  
Are yoked, and puts to flight the phalanxes 610  
Of Argive warriors, or himself is slain.”

He spake, and called to both the Ajaxes  
And Menelaus: “Ye who lead the Greeks,”  
He said, and named the chieftains, “give in charge  
The dead to your best warriors, to surround 615  
And guard the corpse, and drive away the foe;  
But hasten to avert the evil day  
From us who are alive. For even now

Hector comes rushing through the deadly fight,  
And brings Æneas; these are the most brave 620  
Of all the Trojan army. On the knees  
Of the great gods the issue rests. I too  
Will cast the spear, and leave the rest to Jove."

He spake, and lifting his huge spear he smote  
The round shield of Aretus. There the blade 625  
Stopped not, but, entering, pierced him through the belt.  
As, when a vigorous youth with a keen axe  
Strikes a wild bull behind the horns, and there  
Severs the sinews, forward leaps the beast  
And falls,— Aretus, springing forward thus, 630  
Fell headlong. In the Trojan's entrails still  
Quivered the spear, and life forsook his limbs.

Then Hector aimed, to smite Automedon,  
His shining spear. The Greek beheld and stooped,  
And shunned the brazen weapon. Down it came, 635  
And plunged into the earth, and stood, its stem  
Still shaken with the blow, and spent its force.  
Now would the twain have turned, and hand to hand  
Fought with their swords, when suddenly came up  
The warriors Ajax, hastening, at the call 640  
Of their companion, through the crowd, and stayed  
The combat. Hector and Æneas then,



And Chromius, of the godlike form, withdrew  
Through caution, leaving on the battle-field  
Aretus lying mangled. The fierce chief 645  
Automedon despoiled the dead, and spake  
Boastfully: "Somewhat lighter on my heart  
Lies now my grief for Menœtiades,  
Though I have slain a man of meaner note."

As thus he spake, he threw the bloody spoils 650  
Into his chariot, mounting to the seat,  
His feet and hands all crimson with the blood,  
As when a lion has devoured an ox.  
Then round Patroclus raged the strife again,  
Murderous and sad to see; for Pallas there 655  
Inflamed the strife, sent down from heaven by Jove,  
To rouse the courage of the Greeks, since such  
Was now his will. As when the god displays  
To men a purple rainbow in the skies,  
A sign of war or of a bitter storm, 660  
Which drives the laborer from his task, and makes  
The cattle droop, so, in a purple cloud  
Concealed, she went among the Greeks, and filled  
Their hearts with valor. Taking first the form  
Of Phœnix, and his clear, unwearied voice, 665  
She spake in stirring words to Atreus' son,

The gallant Menelaus, standing near:

“Shame and dishonor will it be to thee,

O Menelaus, if, beneath the walls

Of Troy, the hungry dogs should tear the corpse 670

Of him who was in life the faithful friend

Of great Achilles. Fight thou therefore on

Bravely, and bid the other Greeks be brave.”

And Menelaus, great in war, rejoined:

“O Phœnix, aged father, who wert born 675

In days long past, would but Minerva give

The needed strength, and ward from me the stroke

Of weapons, then would I stand by and guard

Patroclus, for his death hath filled my heart

With grief. But Hector's rage is like the rage 680

Of fire; he ceases not to slay; for Jove

Gives to his spear the glory of the day.”

He spake, and well was blue-eyed Pallas pleased

That first to her of all the deities

He prayed; and therefore did she nerve his chest 685

And knees with strength, and put into his heart

The daring of the fly, that, often driven

From man, returns and bites, and finds how sweet

Is human blood. Such resolute zeal she woke

In his stern soul, as quickly he approached 690

Patroclus, and sent forth his shining spear.

Among the Trojans was Eëtion's son,

Podes, the rich and brave, whom Hector held

In highest honor, choosing him to be

Companion of his feasts. Him in the waist

695

The fair-haired Menelaus, as he fled,

Smote, driving home the weapon. With a clash

He fell to earth, and Menelaus drew

The slain away among the Grecian ranks.

Then came Apollo, putting on the form

700

Of Phænops, son of Asius, whose abode

Was in Abydos, and whom Hector most

Esteemed of all his guests. The archer-god

Drew near to Hector, and bespoke him thus:—

“Hector, what other Greek will fear thee now,

705

Since thou dost shrink from Menelaus, deemed

Effeminate in war? Behold, he drags

Away a warrior from thy host; his hand

Hath slain thy faithful friend, Eëtion's son,

Brave Podes, fighting in the foremost ranks.”

710

He spake: a cloud of sorrow overspread

The soul of Hector. Armed in glittering brass,

He went among the warriors in the van.

Then did the son of Saturn lift on high

His fringed ægis, gleaming; with a cloud  
He covered Ida, sent his lightnings down,  
And thundered terribly, and made the mount  
Shake to its base, and gave the victory  
To Troy, and put to rout the Grecian host.

**Peneleus of Bœotia led the fight.** 720

A spear that lighted on the shoulder-tip,  
As he came forward, wounded him. The blade,  
Hurled by Polydamas in close assault,  
Entered and grazed the bone. Then Hector pierced  
The wrist of Leitus, Alectryon's son,

And made him leave the combat. As he fled  
He looked around in fear, nor hoped again  
To wield the spear against the men of Troy.

As Hector followed Leïtus, he met  
The long spear of Idomeneus, which struck  
His corselet near the pap; the weapon broke  
Sheer at the socket, and the Trojans raised

A shout, while Hector at Idomeneus  
Let fly his spear. It missed the chief, but smote  
Cœranus, who from pleasant Lyctus came,  
The friend and follower of Meriones.

For on that day Idomeneus had come  
From his good ships on foot, and great had been

The triumph of the Trojans at his fall,  
If Cœranus had not with his swift steeds 740  
Passed near and bid him mount. 'T was thus he came  
To save Idomeneus from death, and yield  
To the man-queller Hector his own life;  
The javelin entered underneath the ear,  
By the jaw-bone, where, forcing out the teeth, 745  
It cleft the tongue in twain. He fell to earth,  
And dropped the reins. Meriones stooped down  
And took them from the dust in his own hands,  
And thus bespake Idomeneus: "Ply well  
The lash, until thy coursers reach the fleet, 750  
For thou mayst clearly see that victory  
To-day is not upon the Grecian side."

He spake: Idomeneus, fear-smitten, lashed  
The long-maned steeds that hurried toward the fleet.  
Nor now did Menelaus nor his friend, 755  
The valiant Ajax, fail to see that Jove  
Had changed the vantage to the side of Troy.  
And thus the son of Telamon began:—

"Alas! the feeblest mind can now perceive  
That Father Jove is with the sons of Troy, 760  
And gives to them the glory of the day.  
Their weapons smite, whoever sends them forth,

Coward or brave, for Jove directs them all;  
Ours fall to earth in vain. But let us now  
Consult how best to bear the corpse away, 765  
And how, returning, we may meet our friends  
With joy; for they are grieved as they behold  
Our plight, and fear that we may not withstand  
The fiery onset and invincible arm  
Of the man-queller Hector. Would there were 770  
Some comrade who would bear to Peleus' son  
The tidings of the day! for he, I think,  
Has not yet heard that his dear friend is slain.  
None such can I behold of all the Greeks,  
For they are shrouded all—their steeds and they— 775  
In darkness. Father Jove, deliver us  
From darkness; clear the heavens and give our eyes  
Again to see. Destroy us if thou wilt,  
But O destroy us in the light of day!”

He spake: the All-Father saw him shedding tears, 780  
And pitied him, and bade the shadows flee,  
And swept away the cloud. The sun looked forth,  
And all the battle lay in light. Then thus  
To warlike Menelaus Ajax said:—

“O Menelaus, foster-child of Jove, 785  
Look round and see if yet Antilochus,

The large-souled son of Nestor, is alive,  
And bid him bear the tidings in all haste  
To the great son of Peleus, that the one  
Of all his friends whom most he loved is slain." 790

He spake, and Menelaus, great in war,  
Complied, and hastened forth, as from a fold  
A lion stalks away, that long has kept  
In fear the hounds and herdsmen, who all night  
Have watched to drive him from their well-fed beeves, 795  
While, eager for his prey, he rushes oft  
Against them, but in vain, for many a spear  
Is hurled at him, and many a blazing brand,  
Which, fierce for ravin as he is, he dreads,  
Till sullenly at early morn he goes. 800

So from Patroclus went unwillingly  
The valiant Menelaus, for he feared  
Lest, panic-struck, the Greeks should leave his corpse  
The enemy's prey. Thus earnestly he prayed  
The warriors Ajax and Meriones: — 805

"Ye warriors Ajax, leaders of the Greeks!  
And thou, Meriones! let each of you  
Bear well in mind how kindly was the mood  
Of poor Patroclus; gentle in his life  
Was he to all, and now is with the dead." 810

The fair-haired Menelaus, speaking thus,  
Withdrew. He looked around him as he went,  
As looks an eagle, bird of sharpest sight —  
So men declare — of all the fowls of air,  
From which, though high in heaven, the nimble hare 815  
Beneath the thicket is not hid; he stoops,  
And takes the creature's life. Thy piercing eyes,  
O Menelaus, thus on every side  
Were turned, in eager scrutiny, to find  
Among the multitude of Greeks the son 820  
Of Nestor living. Him he soon descried  
Upon the battle's left, where manfully  
He cheered his fellows on. The fair-haired son  
Of Atreus came and stood by him, and said: —  
"Stay, foster-child of Jove, Antilochus! 825  
And listen to the sorrowful news I bring  
Of what should ne'er have been. Thou must have well  
Perceived, I think, that some divinity  
Doth heap disaster on our host, and give  
The victory to the Trojans. He is dead, —  
Patroclus, — the most valiant of the Greeks,  
And great their sorrow is. Now hasten thou  
To the Greek galleys; let Achilles know  
The tidings; he may haply bring the corpse,



Stripped as it is, unmangled to the fleet, 835  
For crested Hector has the arms he wore."

He spake, and at his words Antilochus  
Was horror-struck ; in grief too great for speech,  
Tears filled his eyes, and his clear voice was choked.  
Yet heeded he the mandate. Laying off 840  
His arms, he gave them to his blameless friend,  
Laodocus, who with his firm-paced steeds  
Came toward him. Thus prepared he ran ; his feet  
Carried him swiftly from the battle-field  
To bear the evil news to Peleus' son. 845

Yet Menelaus, foster-child of Jove,  
Thy spirit did not prompt thee to remain  
And aid thy hard-pressed comrades at the spot  
Whence thou didst send Antilochus, and where  
The Pyleans longed to keep him. Yet he sent 850  
The noble Thrasymedes to their aid,  
While he returned to where Patroclus lay,  
And stood beside the warriors there, and said :—

"I sent to swift Achilles at the fleet  
A messenger, yet think he will not come. 855  
Though royal Hector's deed hath roused his rage,  
Unarmed he cannot meet the sons of Troy.  
Consult we then how we may best convey

The body to the ships, and how ourselves  
Escape the doom of death by Trojan hands." 860

The mighty Ajax, son of Telamon,  
Replied: "O Menelaus far-renowned,  
Well hast thou spoken. Lift thou now the corse,  
Thou and Meriones, and place yourselves  
Beneath it, and convey it from the field. 865  
We, following you, will combat with the sons  
Of Troy and noble Hector, — we who, named  
Alike and one in spirit, oft have borne  
The fury of the battle side by side."

He ended, and the warriors in their arms 870  
Raised with main strength the body from the ground.  
The Trojans, as they saw it borne away,  
Shouted behind them, rushing on like hounds  
That spring upon a wounded forest-boar  
Before the hunter-youths now pressing close 875  
Upon his flank, to tear him, then again,  
Whene'er he turns upon them in his strength,  
Retreating in dismay, and put to flight  
Hither and thither. Thus, in hot pursuit  
And close array, the Trojans following strook 880  
With swords and two-edged spears; but when the twain  
Turned and stood firm to meet them, every cheek

Grew pale, and not a single Trojan dared  
Draw near the Greeks to combat for the corse.

Thus rapidly they bore away the dead  
Toward their good galleys from the battle-field.

885

Onward with them the furious battle swept,  
As spreads a fire that, kindled suddenly,  
Seizes a city, and the dwellings sink

In the consuming blaze, and a strong wind  
Roars through the flame. Such fearful din of steeds  
And warriors followed the retreating Greeks.

890

As from a mountain summit strong-backed mules  
Drag over the rough ways a ponderous beam  
Or mast, till weary with the mighty strain

895

And streaming sweat, so they with resolute toil  
Bore off the dead. Behind them as they went  
Their two defenders kept the foe aloof.

As when a river-dike o'ergrown with trees  
Crosses a plain, and holds the violent course  
Of the swoln stream in check, and, driving back

900

The waters, spreads them o'er the level fields,  
Nor can their fury force a passage through,—  
So did the warriors Ajax hold in check

The Trojans; yet they followed close, and two  
More closely than the rest,—Æneas, son

905

Of old Anchises, and the illustrious chief,  
Hector. As when a company of daws  
Or starlings, startled at a hawk's approach,  
The murderous enemy of the smaller birds, 910  
Take wing with piercing cries, so, driven before  
The might of Hector and Æneas, fled  
The Greeks with clamorous cries, and thought no more  
Of combat. In the trench and near it lay  
Many fair weapons, which the fugitive Greeks 915  
Had dropped in haste, and still the war went on.

*BOOK XVIII.*

AS thus they fought with all the rage of fire,  
Antilochus, the nimble-footed, came  
With tidings to Achilles. Him he found  
Before his lofty galleys, deep in thought  
Of what he knew had happened. With a sigh  
The hero to his mighty spirit said:—

“Ah me! why should the Grecians thus be driven  
In utter disarray across the plain?  
I tremble lest the gods should bring to pass  
What most I dread. My mother told me once  
That the most valiant of the Myrmidons,  
While yet I live, cut off by Trojan hands,  
Shall see the sun no more. It must be so:  
The brave son of Menœtius has been slain.  
Unhappy! ’T was my bidding that, when once  
The enemy with his firebrands was repulsed,  
He should not think to combat gallantly  
With Hector, but should hasten to the fleet.”

As thus he mused, illustrious Nestor's son  
Drew near Achilles, and with eyes that shed 20  
Warm tears he gave his sorrowful message thus:—

“Son of the warlike Peleus, woe is me!  
For bitter are the tidings thou must hear  
Of what should not have been. Patroclus lies  
A naked corpse, and over it the hosts 25  
Are fighting; crested Hector hath his arms.”

He spake, and a black cloud of sorrow came  
Over the chieftain. Grasping in both hands  
The ashes of the hearth, he showered them o'er  
His head, and soiled with them his noble face. 30  
They clung in dark lumps to his comely vest.  
Prone in the dust of earth, at his full length,  
And tearing his disordered hair, he lay.

Then wailed aloud the maidens whom in war  
He and Patroclus captured. Forth they came, 35  
And, thronging round him, smote their breasts and swooned.  
Antilochus mourned also, and shed tears,  
Holding Achilles by the hand, for much  
His generous nature dreaded that the chief  
Might aim at his own throat the sword he wore. 40

Loud were the hero's cries, and in the deep  
His gracious mother, where she sat beside

Her aged father, heard them. She too raised  
 A wail of sorrow. All the goddesses,  
 Daughters of Nereus, dwelling in the depths 45  
 Of ocean, gathered to her side. There came  
 Glaucè, Thaleia, and Cymodocè,  
 Nesæa, Speio, Halia with large eyes,  
 And Thoa, and Cymothöè; nor stayed  
 Actæa, Limnorea, Melita, 50  
 Amphithöè, Iæra, Agavè,  
 Doto, and Proto, and Dynamenè.  
 There came Dexamenè, Amphinomè,  
 Pherusa, Callianira, Panopè,  
 Doris, and Galateia, the renowned. 55  
 With these Nemertes and Apseudes came,  
 And Callianassa. Clymenè was there,  
 Janeira and Janassa, and with them  
 Mæra, and Amatheia with bright hair,  
 And Orithya, and whoever else, 60  
 Children of Nereus, bide within the deep.  
 The concourse filled the glimmering cave; they beat  
 Their bosoms, while the sorrowing Thetis spake:—  
 “Hear, sister Nereids, that ye all may know  
 The sharpness of my sorrows. Woe is me, 65  
 Unhappy! Woe is me! in evil hour,

The mother of a hero,—me who gave  
Birth to so noble and so brave a son,  
The first among the warriors, saw him grow  
Like a green sapling, reared him like a plant 70  
Within a fruitful field, and sent him forth  
With his beaked ships to Ilium and the war  
Against the Trojans. Never shall I see  
That son returning to his home, the halls  
Of Peleus. While he lives and sees the light 75  
Of day his lot is sorrow, nor can I  
Help him in aught, though at his side; and yet  
I go to look on my beloved son,  
And learn from him what grief, while he remains  
Aloof from war, o’ertakes him in his tent.” 80

She spake, and left the cavern. All the nymphs  
Went with her weeping. Round their way the waves  
Of ocean parted. When they reached the fields  
Of fertile Troas, up the shore they went  
In ordered files to where, a numerous fleet, 85  
Drawn from the water, round Achilles lay  
The swift ships of the Myrmidons. To him  
His goddess mother came, and with a cry  
Of grief embraced the head of her dear son,  
And, mourning o’er him, spake these wingèd words:— 90



“Why weepest thou, my son? What sorrow now  
O’ercomes thy spirit? Speak, and hide it not.  
All thou didst pray for once, with lifted hands,  
Has been fulfilled by Jove; the sons of Greece,  
Driven to their galleys, and with thy good help 95  
Withdrawn from them, are routed and disgraced.”

The swift Achilles, sighing deeply, made  
This answer: “O my mother! true it is  
Olympian Jove hath done all this for me;  
But how can that delight me, since my friend, 100  
My well-beloved Patroclus, is no more?  
He whom, of all my fellows in the war,  
I prized the most, and loved as my own self,  
Is lost to me, and Hector, by whose hand  
He was cut off, has spoiled him of his arms, — 105  
His dreaded arms, a wonder to the sight  
And glorious, which the gods of heaven bestowed  
On Peleus, sumptuous bridal gifts, when thou  
Wert led by them to share a mortal’s bed.  
Yet would that thou hadst evermore remained 110  
Among the immortal dwellers of the deep,  
And Peleus had espoused a mortal maid,  
Since now thy heart must ache with infinite grief  
For thy slain son, whom thou shalt never more

Welcome returning to his home. No wish 115  
Have I to live or to concern myself  
In men's affairs, save this: that Hector first,  
Pierced by my spear, shall yield his life, and pay  
The debt of vengeance for Patroclus slain."

And Thetis, weeping, answered: "O my son! 120  
Soon must thou die; thou sayest true; that fate  
Hangs over thee as soon as Hector dies."

Again the swift Achilles, sighing, spake:  
"Then quickly let me die, since fate denied  
That I should aid my friend against the foes 125  
That slew him. Far from his own land he fell,  
And longed for me to rescue him. And now,  
Since I am never more to see the land  
I love, and since I went not to defend  
Patroclus, nor the other Greeks, my friends, 130  
Of whom so many have fallen by the hand  
Of noble Hector, but beside the fleet  
Am sitting here, a useless weight on earth,  
Mighty in battle as I am beyond  
The other Grecian warriors, though excelled 135  
By other men in council, — would that Strife  
Might perish among gods and men, with Wrath,  
Which makes even wise men cruel, and, though sweet

At first as dropping honey, growing, fills  
The heart with its foul smoke. Such was my rage, 140  
Aroused by Agamemnon, king of men.  
Yet now, though great my wrong, let things like these  
Rest with the past, and, as the time requires,  
Let us subdue the spirit in our breasts.  
I go in quest of Hector, by whose hand 145  
My friend was slain. My death will I accept  
Whene'er to Jove and to the other gods  
It shall seem good to send it. Hercules,  
Though mighty and beloved of Jupiter,  
The son of Saturn, could not shun his death, 150  
For fate and Juno's cruel wrath prevailed  
Against him. I shall lie in death like him,  
If a like fate be measured out for me.  
Yet now shall I have glory; I shall do  
What many a Trojan and Dardanian dame, 155  
Deep-bosomed, wiping with both hands the tears  
From their fair cheeks, shall bitterly lament;  
And well shall they perceive that, till this hour,  
I paused from war. Thou lov'st me; but seek not  
To keep me from the field, for that were vain." 160

The silver-footed Thetis thus rejoined:  
"Truly, my son, thy purpose is not ill,

To rescue thy endangered friends from death.  
But with the Trojans are thy beautiful arms,  
Brazen and dazzling bright; their crested chief, 165  
Hector, exults to wear them: no long space,  
I think, will he exult; his death is near.  
Yet go not to the battle-field until  
Thine eyes shall look upon me yet again.  
I come to-morrow with the sun, and bring 170  
Bright arms, the work of Vulcan's royal hand."  
So having said, and turning from her son,  
She thus bespake her sisters of the sea:  
"Return to the broad bosom of the deep,  
To its gray Ancient and my father's halls, 175  
And tell him all. I hasten to ascend  
The summits of Olympus, there to ask  
Of Vulcan, the renowned artificer,  
Armor of glorious beauty for my son."  
She spake: at once they plunged into the deep, 180  
While Thetis, silver-footed goddess, sought  
Olympus, whence it was her hope to bring  
New armor for her son. As thus her feet  
Bore her toward heaven, the Achaians, fleeing fast,  
With infinite clamor, driven before the arm 185  
Of the man-queller Hector, reached the ships

And Hellespont. Nor could the well-armed Greeks  
Bear off Patroclus from the shower of darts;  
For rushing on them came both foot and horse,  
And Hector, son of Priam, like a flame 190  
In fury. Thrice illustrious Hector seized  
The body by the heels to drag it off,  
And called his Trojans with a mighty shout.  
Thrice did the chieftains Ajax, terrible  
In resolute valor, drive him from the dead. 195  
Yet kept he to his purpose, confident  
In his own might, now charging through the crowd,  
Now standing firm and shouting to his men,  
And never losing ground. As when, at night,  
Herdsmen that watch their cattle strive in vain 200  
To drive a lion, fierce and famine-pinched,  
From some slain beast, so the two Ajaxes,  
With all their valor, vainly strove to keep  
Hector, the son of Priam, from the corpse.  
And now would he have dragged it thence, and won 205  
Infinite glory, had not Iris come—  
The goddess whose swift feet are like the wind—  
To Peleus' son, a messenger from heaven,  
In haste, unknown to Jupiter and all  
The other gods,—for Juno sent her down,— 210

To bid the hero arm. She came and stood  
Beside him, speaking thus with wingèd words: —

“Pelides, rise, most terrible of men,  
In rescue of Patroclus, over whom  
They struggle fiercely at the fleet; for there 215  
They slay each other, — these who fight to keep  
The dead, and those, the men of Troy, who charge  
To drag him off to Ilium’s airy heights;  
And chief, illustrious Hector longs to seize  
The corpse, and from the delicate neck to hew 220  
The head, and fix it on a stake. Arise,  
Loiter no longer; — rise, ashamed to leave  
Patroclus to be torn by Trojan dogs.  
For thine will be the infamy, if yet  
The corpse be brought dishonored to thy tent.” 225

The swift Achilles listened and inquired:  
“Which of the gods, O Iris, speaks by thee?”  
And Iris, whose swift feet are like the wind,  
Answered: “The glorious spouse of Jupiter,  
Juno, hath sent me. Even Saturn’s son, 230  
On his high throne, knows not that I am sent,  
Nor any other of the gods who dwell  
Upon Olympus overspread with snow.”

“But how,” the swift Achilles asked again,

“Shall I go forth to war? They have my arms, 235  
And my beloved mother strictly bade  
That I should put no armor on until  
I saw her face again. She promised me  
A suit of glorious mail from Vulcan’s hand.  
Nor know I any warrior here whose arms 240  
Might serve me, save, perhaps, it were the shield  
Of Telamonian Ajax, who, I hope,  
Is in the van, and dealing death among  
The foe, in vengeance for Patroclus slain.”

Then the swift-footed Iris spake again: 245  
“They have thy glorious armor; that we know.  
But go thou to the trench, and show thyself  
To them of Troy, that, haply smit with fear,  
They may desist from battle, and the host  
Of Grecian warriors, overtoiled, may breathe 250  
In a brief respite from the stress of war.”

So the fleet Iris spake, and passed away,  
And then arose Achilles, dear to Jove,  
While o’er his ample shoulders Pallas held  
Her fringed ægis. The great goddess caused 255  
A golden cloud to gather round his head  
And kindled in the cloud a dazzling flame.  
And as when smoke, ascending to the sky,

Hangs o'er some city in a distant isle,  
Which enemies beleaguer, swarming forth 260  
From their own city, and in hateful strife  
Contend all day, but when the sun goes down  
Forthwith blaze many bale-fires, sending up  
A brightness which the neighboring realms may see,  
That haply they may send their ships and drive 265  
The war away, — so from the hero's head  
That flame streamed upward to the sky. He came  
Without the wall and stood beside the trench,  
Nor mingled with the Greeks, for he revered  
His mother's words. He stood and called aloud, 270  
And Pallas, from the host, returned his shout, —  
A shout that carried infinite dismay  
Into the Trojan squadrons. As the sound  
Of trumpet rises clear when deadly foes  
Lay siege to a walled city, such was heard 275  
The clear shout uttered by Æacides.  
The hearts of all who heard that brazen voice  
Were troubled, and their steeds with flowing manes  
Turned backward with the chariots, — such the dread  
Of coming slaughter. When the charioteers 280  
Beheld the terrible flame that played unquenched  
Upon the brow of the magnanimous son



Of Peleus, lighted by the blue-eyed maid  
Minerva, they were struck with panic fear.  
Thrice o'er the trench Achilles shouted; thrice  
The men of Troy and their renowned allies  
Fell into wild disorder. Then there died,  
Entangled midst their chariots, and transfixed  
By their own spears, twelve of their bravest chiefs.  
The Greeks bore off Patroclus from the field  
With eager haste, and placed him on a bier,  
And there the friends that loved him gathered round  
Lamenting. With them swift Achilles came,  
The hot tears on his cheeks, as he beheld  
His faithful comrade lying on his bier,  
Mangled with many wounds, whom he had sent  
With steeds and car to battle, never more  
To welcome him alive on his return.

Now Juno, large-eyed and august, bade set  
The never-wearied sun; unwillingly  
He sank into the ocean streams. Then paused  
The noble Greeks from that ferocious strife,  
Deadly in equal measure to both hosts.  
The Trojans also paused, and from their cars  
Unharnessed the fleet steeds, and ere they took  
Their evening meal assembled to consult.

Standing they held the council; no man cared  
To sit, for all were trembling from the hour  
When, long a stranger to the bloody field,  
Achilles showed himself again. And now 320  
The son of Panthoüs, wise Polydamas,  
Began to speak. Beyond the rest he saw  
Things past and things to come, and he had been  
Hector's companion, born in the same night,  
Mighty in speech as Hector with the spear. 325  
With prudent admonitions thus he spake: —  
    "Consider well, my friends. My counsel is  
That we return, nor wait the holy morn  
Here, by the fleet and in the open plain,  
Far from our city ramparts. While this man 330  
Was wroth with Agamemnon, we maintained  
A strife of far less peril with the Greeks,  
And I was ever ready to encamp  
By night beside the galleys, which we hoped  
To make our prize; but now I fear the might 335  
Of swift Pelides. He will not remain  
Content upon the space between the fleet  
And town, where Greeks and Trojans wage a war  
Of changeful fortune, but will strive to take  
The city, and to carry off our wives. 340

March we then homeward. Let my words prevail, —  
It must be so. The gentle Night now keeps  
The nimble-footed hero from the war.  
But if to-morrow, issuing forth in arms,  
He find us here, there are among us those 335  
Who will have cause to know him. Gladly then  
Will he find refuge who escapes his arm  
In sacred Troy, and many a Trojan corpse  
Will feed the dogs and vultures. May mine ear  
Hear of it never. But if ye will heed 340  
My words, though sorrowful, ye shall be safe  
Assembled in the city squares at night.  
The lofty towers and gates, with massive beams  
Polished and strongly fitted each to each,  
Will keep the town. To-morrow we shall take, 345  
At dawn, our station on the towers, arrayed  
In armor, and his difficult task will be,  
Far from his ships, to fight us from below;  
And after he has tired his high-necked steeds  
With coursing round the ramparts to and fro, 350  
Back to his galleys he must go; nor yet  
With all his valor can he force his way  
Into the town to lay its dwellings waste, —  
The dogs will feed upon his carcass first."

And crested Hector answered with a frown : 355  
“The counsel ~~thou~~ hast given, Polydamas,  
Pleases me not, — that we return to be  
Pent up in Troy. Are ye not weary yet  
Of lying long imprisoned within walls  
And towers? The time has been that in all lands, 360  
Wherever human speech is heard, the fame  
Of Priam’s city, for its treasured gold  
And brass, was in all mouths. Those treasures now  
Have passed away; our dwellings have them not.  
Much that we had was sold on Phrygia’s coast, 365  
And in Mæonia’s pleasant land, for Jove  
The mighty was displeased with us. But now,  
When politic Saturn’s son hath granted me  
To win great glory at the fleet, and hold  
The Greeks imprisoned by the sea, refrain, 370  
Idler, from laying counsels such as these  
Before the people. Not a Trojan here  
Will follow them, nor would I suffer it.  
Now hearken all, and act as I advise:  
First banquet, rank by rank, throughout the host, 375  
And set your guards, and each of you keep watch;  
And then, if any Trojan stands in fear  
For his possessions, let him bring them all

Into the common stock, to be consumed;  
Better that we enjoy them than the Greeks. 380  
To-morrow, with the dawn and all in arms,  
We will do battle at the roomy ships  
Valiantly. If in truth the noble son  
Of Peleus choose to rise and to defend  
The ships, so much the worse for him, since I 385  
Shall not for him desert the field, but stand  
Firmly against him, whether he obtain  
The victory or I. The chance of war  
Is equal, and the slayer oft is slain."

So Hector spake: the Trojans shouted forth 390  
Applause, the madmen! Pallas took away  
Their reason; all approved the fatal plan  
Of Hector; no one ventured to commend  
The sober counsel of Polydamas.  
And then they banqueted throughout the host; 395  
But all night long the Achaians mourned with tears  
Patroclus, while Pelides in the midst,  
Leading the ceaseless lamentation, placed  
His slaughter-dealing hands upon the breast  
Of his companion with continual sighs. 400  
As a maned lion, from whose haunt within  
The thick, dark wood a hunter has borne off

The whelps, returning finds them gone, and grieves,  
And roams the valleys, tracking as he goes  
The robber, bent to find him, for his rage 405  
Is fierce,—with such fierce sorrow Peleus' son  
Spake, deeply sighing, to his Myrmidons:—  
    “O, idle were the words which once I spake,  
When in our palace-halls I bade the chief  
Mencætiüs bear a cheerful heart. I said 410  
That I would bring to Opus yet again,  
Laden with spoil from Ilium overthrown,  
His valiant son. But Jove doth not fulfil  
The plans of men. That both of us should stain  
Earth with our blood in Troy was the decree 415  
Of fate, and never will the aged knight  
Peleus receive me in his palace-halls,  
Returning from the war, nor Thetis, she  
Who gave me birth; the earth will hold me here.  
And now, since after thee I take my place 420  
In earth, Patroclus, I will not perform  
Thy funeral rites before I bring to thee  
The arms and head of the magnanimous chief  
Hector, who slew thee. By thy funeral pile  
I will strike off in vengeance for thy death 425  
The heads of twelve illustrious Trojan youths.

Thou meanwhile, lying at the beakèd ships,  
Shalt be lamented night and day, with tears,  
By many a Trojan and Dardanian maid,  
Deep-bosomed, won by our victorious spears 400  
After hard wars and opulent cities sacked."

Thus having said, the great Achilles bade  
Place a huge tripod on the fire in haste,  
To cleanse Patroclus from the clotted blood.  
They brought and set upon the glowing hearth 435  
A tripod for the bath, and in it poured  
Water, and piled the wood beneath. The flame  
Crept up the vessel's rounded sides and warmed  
The water. When within the murmuring brass  
It boiled, they washed the dead, and with rich oil 440  
Anointed him, and filled the open wounds  
With ointment nine years old; and laying him  
Upon a couch, they spread from head to foot  
Fine linen over him, and covered all  
With a white mantle. Through the hours of night 445  
The Myrmidons, lamenting their dead chief,  
Wept round the swift Achilles. Then did Jove  
Thus to his wife and sister Juno speak:—

"Large-eyed, imperial Juno, thou hast now  
Accomplished thy desire, for thou hast roused 450

The swift Achilles. There is not a doubt  
The long-haired Argives owe their birth to thee."

And large-eyed Juno answered: "What strange words,  
Austere Saturnius, hast thou said? A man,  
A mortal far less skilled in shaping means 455  
To compass ends, might do what I have done  
Against his fellow-man. Then should not I—  
Who boast to be the chief of goddesses  
By birthright, and because I bear the name  
Of wife to thee who rulest o'er the gods— 460  
Plan evil to the Trojans, whom I hate?"

So talked they. Silver-footed Thetis came  
Meanwhile to Vulcan's halls, eternal, gemmed  
With stars, a wonder to the immortals, wrought  
Of brass by the lame god. She found him there 465  
Sweating and toiling, and with busy hand  
Plying the bellows. He was fashioning  
Tripods, a score, to stand beside the wall  
Of his fair palace. All of these he placed  
On wheels of gold, that, of their own accord, 470  
They might roll in among the assembled gods,  
And then roll back, a marvel to behold.  
So far they all were finished; but not yet  
Were added the neat handles, and for these



The god was forging rivets busily. 475  
While thus he labored, with a mind intent  
Upon his skilful task, on silver feet  
Came Thetis. Charis, of the snowy veil,  
The beautiful, whom the great god of fire,  
Vulcan, had made his wife, beheld, and came 480  
Forward to meet her, seized her hand, and said:—  
“O Thetis of the flowing robe, beloved  
And honored, what has brought thee to our home?  
Thou dost not often visit us. Come in,  
That I may pay the honors due a guest.” 485  
So the bright goddess spake, and led the way,  
And seated Thetis on a sumptuous throne,  
With silver studs divinely wrought, and placed  
A footstool, and called out to Vulcan thus:  
“Come, Vulcan; Thetis here hath need of thee.” 490  
And the great artist, Vulcan, thus replied:  
“Then of a truth a goddess is within  
Whom I must ever honor and revere;  
Who from the danger of my terrible fall  
Saved me, what time my shameless mother sought 495  
To cast me from her sight, for I was lame.  
Then great had been my misery, had not  
Eurynomè and Thetis in their laps

Received me as I fell,—Eurynomè,  
Daughter of billowy Ocean. There I dwelt 500  
Nine years, and many ornaments I wrought  
Of brass,—clasps, buckles, bracelets, necklaces,—  
Within a vaulted cave, round which the tides  
Of the vast ocean murmured and flung up  
Their foam; nor any of the gods or men 505  
Knew of my hiding-place, save only they  
Who saved me, Thetis and Eurynomè.  
And now, as she is with us, I must make,  
To fair-haired Thetis some thank-offering  
For having rescued me. Haste, spread the board 510  
Amplly with generous fare, while I shall lay  
Aside my bellows and my implements.”

He spake, and from his anvil-block arose,  
A mighty bulk; his weak legs under him,  
Halting, moved painfully. He laid apart 515  
His bellows from the fire, and gathered up  
The scattered implements with which he wrought,  
And locked them in a silver chest, and wiped  
With a moist sponge his face and both his hands,  
Stout neck and hairy chest. He then put on 520  
His tunic, took his massive regal wand  
Into his hand, and, tottering, sallied forth.

Two golden statues, like in form and look  
To living maidens, aided with firm gait  
The monarch's steps. And mind was in their breasts, 535  
And they had speech and strength, and from the gods  
Had learned becoming arts. Beside their lord  
They walked and tended him. As he drew near,  
Halting, to Thetis on the shining throne,  
He took the goddess by the hand and said:— 530

“What cause, O Thetis of the flowing robe,  
Honored and dear, has brought thee to our home?  
Not often com'st thou hither. Freely say  
Whatever lies upon thy mind. My heart  
Commands me to obey, if it be aught 535  
That can be done and may be done by me.”

And Thetis answered, with a gush of tears:  
“O Vulcan! of the goddesses who dwell  
Upon Olympus, is there one who bears  
Such bitter sorrows as Saturnian Jove 540  
Inflicts on me, distressed above them all?  
Me, of the ocean deities, he forced  
To take a mortal husband, — Peleus, son  
Of Æacus, — and to his bed I came  
Unwillingly. Within his palace halls, 545  
Worn with a late old age, my husband lies.

Now I have other woes ; for when a son  
Was granted me, and I had brought him forth  
And reared him, flourishing like a young plant,  
A sapling in a fertile field, and great 550  
Among the heroes,—thus maturely trained,  
I sent him with his beakèd ships to Troy,  
To combat with her sons; but never more  
Will it be mine to welcome him returned  
Home to the halls of Peleus. While to me 555  
He lives, and sees the sunshine, he endures  
Affliction, nor can I, though at his side,  
Aid him in aught. The maiden whom the Greeks  
Decreed him as his prize, the king of men,  
Atrides, took away, and grief for her 560  
Consumes his heart. The Trojans keep the Greeks  
Beleaguered by their ships, nor suffer them  
To pass beyond their gates. The elder chiefs  
Implored him to relent, and offered him  
Large presents; he refused to avert the doom 565  
That threatened them himself, but sent instead  
Patroclus to the war with his own arms,  
And with him sent much people. All the day  
They fought before the Scæan gates; and then  
Had Ilium fallen, but that Apollo slew 570

The brave son of Menœtius, who had caused  
Vast slaughter,—slew him fighting in the van  
Of war, and gave the glory of his death  
To Hector. Therefore I approach thy knees,  
And ask for him, my son, so soon to die, 575  
Buckler and helm, and beautiful greaves, shut close  
With clasps, and all the other arms complete,  
Which in the war my son's companion lost.  
For now Achilles lies upon the ground  
Bitterly grieving in his inmost soul.” 580

And Vulcan, the great artist, answered her :  
“Be comforted, and take no further thought  
Of this; for would I could as certainly  
Shield him from death's dread summons when his hour  
Is come at last, as I shall have for him 585  
Beautiful armor ready to put on,  
And such as every man, of multitudes  
Who look on it hereafter, shall admire.”

So speaking he withdrew, and went where lay  
The bellows, turned them toward the fire, and bade 590  
The work begin. From twenty bellows came  
Their breath into the furnaces,—a blast  
Varied in strength as need might be; for now  
They blew with violence for a hasty task,

And then with gentler breath, as Vulcan pleased 595  
And as the work required. Upon the fire  
He laid impenetrable brass, and tin,  
And precious gold and silver; on its block  
Placed the huge anvil, took the ponderous sledge,  
And held the pincers in the other hand. 600

And first he forged the huge and massive shield,  
• Divinely wrought in every part,—its edge  
Clasped with a triple border, white and bright.  
A silver belt hung from it, and its folds  
Were five; a crowd of figures on its disk 605  
Were fashioned by the artist's passing skill,  
For here he placed the earth and heaven, and here  
The great deep and the never-resting sun  
And the full moon, and here he set the stars  
That shine in the round heaven,—the Pleiades, 610  
The Hyades, Orion in his strength,  
And the Bear near him, called by some the Wain,  
That, wheeling, keeps Orion still in sight,  
Yet bathes not in the waters of the sea.

There placed he two fair cities full of men. 615  
In one were marriages and feasts; they led  
The brides with flaming torches from their bowers,  
Along the streets, with many a nuptial song.

There the young dancers whirled, and flutes and lyres  
Gave forth their sounds, and women at the doors 620  
Stood and admired. Meanwhile a multitude  
Was in the forum, where a strife went on,—  
Two men contending for a fine, the price  
Of one who had been slain. Before the crowd  
One claimed that he had paid the fine, and one 625  
Denied that aught had been received, and both  
Called for the sentence which should end the strife.  
The people clamored for both sides, for both  
Had eager friends; the heralds held the crowd  
In check; the elders, upon polished stones, 630  
Sat in a sacred circle. Each one took,  
In turn, a herald's sceptre in his hand,  
And, rising, gave his sentence. In the midst  
Two talents lay in gold, to be the meed  
Of him whose juster judgment should prevail. 635  
Around the other city sat two hosts  
In shining armor, bent to lay it waste,  
Unless the dwellers would divide their wealth,—  
All that their pleasant homes contained,—and yield  
The assailants half. As yet the citizens 640  
Had not complied, but secretly had planned  
An ambush. Their beloved wives meanwhile,

And their young children, stood and watched the walls,  
With aged men among them, while the youths  
Marched on, with Mars and Pallas at their head, 645  
Both wrought in gold, with golden garments on,  
Stately and large in form, and over all  
Conspicuous, in bright armor, as became  
The gods; the rest were of an humbler size.  
And when they reached the spot where they should lie 650  
In ambush, by a river's side, a place  
For watering herds, they sat them down, all armed  
In shining brass. Apart from all the rest  
They placed two sentries, on the watch to spy  
The approach of sheep and hornèd kine. Soon came 655  
The herds in sight; two shepherds walked with them,  
Who, all unweeting of the evil nigh,  
Solaced their task with music from their reeds.  
The warriors saw and rushed on them, and took  
And drave away large prey of beeves, and flocks 660  
Of fair white sheep, whose keepers they had slain.  
When the besiegers in their council heard  
The sound of tumult at the watering-place,  
They sprang upon their nimble-footed steeds,  
And overtook the pillagers. Both bands 665  
Arrayed their ranks and fought beside the stream,



And smote each other. There did Discord rage,  
And Tumult, and the great Destroyer, Fate.

One wounded warrior she had seized alive,  
And one unwounded yet, and through the field 670  
Dragged by the foot another, dead. Her robe  
Was reddened o'er the shoulders with the blood  
From human veins. Like living men they ranged  
The battle-field, and dragged by turns the slain.

There too he sculptured a broad fallow field 675  
Of soft rich mould, thrice ploughed, and over which  
Walked many a ploughman, guiding to and fro  
His steers, and when on their return they reached  
The border of the field the master came  
To meet them, placing in the hands of each 680  
A goblet of rich wine. Then turned they back  
Along the furrows, diligent to reach  
Their distant end. All dark behind the plough  
The ridges lay, a marvel to the sight,  
Like real furrows, though engraved in gold. 685

There, too, the artist placed a field which lay  
Deep in ripe wheat. With sickles in their hands  
The laborers reaped it. Here the handfuls fell  
Upon the ground; there binders tied them fast  
With bands, and made them sheaves. Three binders went

Close to the reapers, and behind them boys, 691  
Bringing the gathered handfuls in their arms,  
Ministered to the binders. Staff in hand,  
The master stood among them by the side  
Of the ranged sheaves and silently rejoiced. 695  
Meanwhile the servants underneath an oak  
Prepared a feast apart; they sacrificed  
A fatling ox and dressed it, while the maids  
Were kneading for the reapers the white meal.

A vineyard also on the shield he graved, 700  
Beautiful, all of gold, and heavily  
Laden with grapes. Black were the clusters all;  
The vines were stayed on rows of silver stakes.  
He drew a blue trench round it, and a hedge  
Of tin. One only path there was by which 705  
The vintagers could go to gather grapes.  
Young maids and striplings of a tender age  
Bore the sweet fruit in baskets. Midst them all,  
A youth from his shrill harp drew pleasant sounds,  
And sang with soft voice to the murmuring strings. 710  
They danced around him, beating with quick feet  
The ground, and sang and shouted joyously.

And there the artist wrought a herd of beeves,  
High-horned, and sculptured all in gold and tin.

They issued lowing from their stalls to seek 715  
Their pasture, by a murmuring stream, that ran  
Rapidly through its reeds. Four herdsmen, graved  
In gold, were with the beeves, and nine fleet dogs  
Followed. Two lions, seizing on a bull  
Among the foremost cattle, dragged him off 720  
Fearfully bellowing; hounds and herdsmen rushed  
To rescue him. The lions tore their prey,  
And lapped the entrails and the crimson blood.  
Vainly the shepherds pressed around and urged  
Their dogs, that shrank from fastening with their teeth 725  
Upon the lions, but stood near and bayed.

There also did illustrious Vulcan grave  
A fair, broad pasture, in a pleasant glade,  
Full of white sheep, and stalls, and cottages,  
And many a shepherd's fold with sheltering roof. 730

And there illustrious Vulcan also wrought  
A dance,—a maze like that which Dædalus,  
In the broad realm of Gnossus once contrived  
For fair-haired Ariadne. Blooming youths  
And lovely virgins, tripping to light airs, 735  
Held fast each other's wrists. The maidens wore  
Fine linen robes; the youths had tunics on  
Lustrous as oil, and woven daintily.

The maids wore wreaths of flowers; the young men swords  
Of gold in silver belts. They bounded now 740  
In a swift circle,—as a potter whirls  
With both his hands a wheel to try its speed,  
Sitting before it,—then again they crossed  
Each other, darting to their former place.  
A multitude around that joyous dance 745  
Gathered, and were amused, while from the crowd  
Two tumblers raised their song, and flung themselves  
About among the band that trod the dance.

Last on the border of that glorious shield  
He graved in all its strength the ocean-stream. 750  
And when that huge and massive shield was done,  
He forged a corselet brighter than the blaze  
Of fire; he forged a solid helm to fit  
The hero's temples, shapely and enchased  
With rare designs, and with a crest of gold. 755  
And last he forged him greaves of ductile tin.

When the great artist Vulcan saw his task  
Complete, he lifted all that armor up  
And laid it at the feet of her who bore  
Achilles. Like a falcon in her flight, 760  
Down plunging from Olympus capped with snow,  
She bore the shining armor Vulcan gave.

## BOOK XIX.

IN saffron-colored mantle from the tides  
Of Ocean rose the Morning to bring light  
To gods and men, when Thetis reached the fleet,  
Bringing the gift of Vulcan. There she found  
Her son, who, bending o'er Patroclus, wept 5  
Aloud, and all around a troop of friends  
Lamented bitterly. Beside him stood  
The glorious goddess, took his hand, and said:—  
“Leave we the dead, my son, since it hath pleased  
The gods that he should fall; and now receive 10  
This sumptuous armor, forged by Vulcan's hand,  
Beautiful, such as no man ever wore.”  
The goddess spake, and laid the armor down  
Before Achilles; as they touched the earth,  
The well-wrought pieces clanked, and terror seized 15  
The Myrmidons. No one among them all  
Dared fix his gaze upon them; all shrank back.  
Achilles only, as he saw them, felt

His spirit roused within him. In his eyes  
A terrible brightness flashed, as if of fire.  
He lifted up the god's magnificent gift  
Rejoicing, and, when long his eyes had dwelt  
Delighted on the marvellous workmanship,  
Thus to his mother said, in wingèd words:—

“A god indeed, my mother, must have given  
These arms, the work of heavenly hands: no man  
Could forge them. Now I arm myself for war.  
But for the valiant Menœtiades  
I greatly fear that flies will gather round  
The wounds inflicted by the spear, and worms  
Be bred within them, to pollute the corpse  
Now that the life is gone, and taint the whole.”

And silver-footed Thetis answered thus:  
“Son, have no care for that. The task be mine  
To drive away the importunate swarm that feed  
On heroes slain in battle. Though it lie  
The whole year long, the body shall remain  
Even more than uncorrupted. Call thou now  
To council all the Achaian chiefs; renounce  
Thy feud with Agamemnon, king of men,  
And arm for war, and put on all thy might.”

She spake, and called a fiery courage up

Within the hero's breast. The goddess then  
Infused ambrosia and the ruddy juice  
Of nectar through the nostrils of the dead 45  
Into the frame, to keep it from decay.

Along the beach the great Achilles went,  
Calling with mighty shouts the Grecian chiefs.  
Then even they who till that day remained  
Beside the fleet,—the pilots and the men 50  
Who held the helm, the stewards of the ships,  
And the purveyors,—all made haste to swell  
The assembly, for they knew that he who long  
Had borne no part in the disastrous war  
Had now come forth. Two ministers of Mars, 55  
The brave Tydides and the nobly born  
Ulysses, both supported by their spears,  
Came halting, for their wounds were painful yet;  
They came and sat among the foremost chiefs.  
And last came Agamemnon, king of men, 60  
Wounded, for he had felt in thick of fight  
The edge of the sharp spear which Coön bore,  
Antenor's son. Now when the Greeks were all  
Assembled, swift Achilles rose and said:—

“Atrides, of a truth it would have been 65  
Better for both of us had we done this

At first, though sorely angered, when we strove  
For a girl's sake so fiercely. Would that she  
Had perished in my ships, by Dian's shaft,  
The day on which I laid Lyrnessus waste! 70  
So many Greeks would then have not been forced,  
Slain by the enemy's hand, to bite the dust  
Of the great earth, while I was brooding o'er  
My wrath. All that was for the good of Troy  
And Hector; but the Greeks, I think, will long 75  
Remember our contention. Let us leave  
These things among the things that were, and, though  
They make us grieve, let us subdue our minds  
To what the time requires. Here then my wrath  
Shall end; it is not meet that it should burn 80  
Forever. Hasten thou and rouse to war  
The long-haired Greeks, that I may yet again  
Go forth among the men of Troy, and learn  
If they design to encamp another night  
Before the fleet. There is among them all 85  
No man, I ween, who will not joyfully  
Sit down when he escapes my deadly spear."

He ended, and the Achaians all rejoiced  
To hear the brave Pelides thus renounce  
His anger. Agamemnon, king of men, 90



Then rose. He came not forth into the midst,  
But stood beside his seat, and thus he spake:—

“O friends, Achaian heroes, ministers  
Of Mars! Whoever rises up to speak  
'Tis well to hear him through, and not break in 95  
Upon his speech, else is the most expert  
Confounded. Who amid a clamorous throng  
Can listen or can speak? The orator  
Of clearest voice must utter it in vain.  
Now I address Pelides; for the rest, 100  
Hearken ye all, and ponder what I say.  
The Greeks speak often of this feud, and cast  
The blame on me. Yet was I not the cause,  
But Jupiter and Fate, and she who walks  
In darkness, dread Erynnis. It was they 105  
Who filled my mind with fury in the hour  
When from Achilles I bore off his prize.  
What could I do? A deity prevails  
In all things, Atè, mighty to destroy,  
Daughter of Jove, and held in awe by all. 110  
Delicate are her feet; she never comes  
Near to the ground, but glides above the heads  
Of men, to do them harm, and in her net  
Entangles one at least of two who strive.

Jove, deemed the mightiest among men and gods, 115  
Once felt her power of mischief. Him his spouse,  
Juno, entrapped by cunning, when within  
The massive walls of Thebes Alcmena lay  
In childbed, and the mighty Hercules  
Was near his birth. For Jupiter had said 120  
Boastfully to the immortals: 'Hear, ye gods  
And goddesses, what I am moved to speak:  
This day shall Ilithyia, who presides  
At births, bring into light a prince whose rule  
The neighboring tribes shall own; he shall be one 125  
Who bears the blood of my illustrious race.'

"Imperial Juno thus, with words of guile,  
Made answer: 'What thou sayest will prove false,  
Nor wilt thou keep thy word. Now swear to me,  
Olympius, with the irrevocable oath, 130  
That whosoever of thy race shall fall  
This day between a woman's feet shall bear  
The rule o'er all the neighboring tribes.' She spake,  
And Jove, perceiving not her craft, complied,  
And took the mighty oath, but afterward 135  
Found himself wronged. For Juno, darting forth,  
Shot from the Olympian summit, and at once  
Alighted at Achaian Argos. There

She found the noble wife of Sthenelus,  
The son of Perseus, pregnant with a son, 140  
In the seventh month. She caused him to be born,  
The number of his months yet incomplete,  
And kept Alcmena's hour of childbirth back,  
And stayed her pangs. The goddess then made haste  
To bear the tidings to Saturnian Jove. 145

“O Father Jupiter, by whom are hurled  
The ruddy lightnings, I have news for thee.  
A man-child of a generous stock is born,—  
Eurystheus, whom the Argives shall obey,—  
Born at this hour to Sthenelus, the son 150  
Of Perseus, who is thine. And well it is  
That such a prince should rule the Argive race.’

“She ended: Jupiter was deeply grieved,  
And, seizing Atè by her shining locks,  
In his great wrath, he swore a mighty oath,— 155  
That Atè, whose delight it is to bring  
Mischief to all, should never tread again  
Olympus and the starry floor of heaven.  
Thus having sworn, he swung her, with raised arm,  
On high, and hurled her from the starry heaven 160  
Downward, where soon she reached the haunts of men ;  
Yet oft in after time because of her

He sighed, beholding his beloved son  
Doomed by Eurystheus to unworthy tasks.  
So I, while crested Hector in his might 165  
Made havoc at our fleet among the Greeks  
Even by their prowess, remembered well my fault.  
And now since I have borne the penalty,  
And Jupiter it was who took away  
My reason, I would gladly make amends 170  
With liberal gifts. But rise and join the war;  
Inflame the courage of the rest; the gifts  
Will I supply, — all that were promised thee  
When nobly-born Ulysses yesterday  
Went to thy tents. Or, if it please thee, wait, 175  
Though armed for battle, and my train shall bring  
The treasures from my ship, that thou mayst see  
My presents are peace-offerings indeed.”

The swift of foot, Achilles, answered thus:  
“Most glorious son of Atreus, king of men! 180  
Whether, O Agamemnon, thou wilt give  
Gifts, as is meet, or keep them, rests with thee.  
Now let us think of war; it is not well  
To waste the hour in talking, and put off  
The mighty work that we have yet to do. 185  
Let every Greek among you, as he sees

Achilles fighting in the foremost ranks,  
And slaughtering the Trojan phalanxes,  
Take heart and boldly combat with his man."

And then Ulysses, wise in council, spake, 190  
Answering Achilles: "Nay, thou shouldst not thus,  
Brave as thou art, lead on the sons of Greece,  
Yet fasting, to the conflict with the men  
Of Troy beside their city. No brief space  
The struggle will endure when once the foes 195  
Rush on each other, and a god inspires  
Both hosts with fury. Bid the Achaians take  
In their swift galleys food and wine; in these  
Are force and vigor. No man can endure  
To combat all the day till set of sun, 200  
Save with the aid of food, however great  
The promptings of his valor; for his limbs  
Grow heavy, thirst and hunger weaken him,  
And his knees fail him as he walks. Not so  
The warrior well supplied with food and wine: 205  
He fights the foe all day; a resolute heart  
Is in his bosom; nor does weariness  
O'ertake him till all others leave the field.  
Now let the people be dismissed awhile,  
And a repast be ordered. Let the king, 210

Atrides, bring into the assembly here  
His gifts, that all the Greeks may look on them,  
And thou rejoice to see them. Let him rise  
Among the Greeks, and take a solemn oath  
That he has ne'er approached the maiden's bed 215  
To claim a husband's right. Thus let thy heart  
Be satisfied. Yet let the monarch spread  
A sumptuous banquet in his tent for thee,  
That thy redress may be complete. And thou,  
Atrides, wilt hereafter be more just 220  
To others. It dishonors not a king  
To make amends to one whom he has wronged."

And then King Agamemnon spake in turn:  
"Son of Laertes, gladly have I heard  
What thou hast said, and well hast thou discoursed 225  
Of all things in their order. I will take  
The oath of which thou speakest,—so my heart  
Commands me. In the presence of a god  
I take it, and commit no perjury.  
Now let Achilles, though he longs for war, 230  
Delay awhile; and all assembled here,  
Remain ye on the ground till from my ship  
The gifts are brought. This charge and this command  
I give to thee, Ulysses. Take with thee

A band of youths, the noblest of the host, 235  
And bring the presents promised yesterday  
To Peleus' son, and hither let them lead  
The women. Meantime let Talthybius haste  
To bring from our broad camp a boar, which I  
Will offer up to Jove and to the Sun." 240

The swift of foot, Achilles, thus replied:  
"Most glorious son of Atreus, king of men,  
These things are for the time when there shall come  
A pause from battle, and this warlike heat  
Within my breast shall cool. They whom the spear 245  
Of Hector, son of Priam, has o'ercome  
Lie mangled on the earth, since Jupiter  
Awarded him the glory of the day:—  
And ye propose a banquet. I would call  
The sons of Greece to rush into the war 250  
Unfed and fasting, and when this disgrace  
Shall be avenged, I would, at sunset, spread  
A liberal feast. Be sure that I, till then,  
Taste neither food nor drink, while my slain friend  
Lies gashed with weapons in my tent, amidst 255  
His sorrowing comrades. Little I regard  
The things of which thou speakest, for my thoughts  
Are all of bloodshed and of dying groans."

Ulysses, the sagacious, thus rejoined:

“Achilles, son of Peleus, bravest far 260  
Of all the Achaians, mightier with the spear  
By no small odds than I, yet do I stand  
In prudence much above thee; I have lived  
More years, and more have learned. Let then thy mind  
Accept what I shall say. Men soon become 265  
Weary of warfare, even when the sword  
Lays its most ample harvest on the earth.  
But fewer sheaves are reaped when Jupiter,  
The arbiter of battles, turns the scale.  
It is not well that we of Greece should mourn 270  
The dead with fasting, since from day to day  
Our warriors fall in numbers. Where were then  
Respite from daily fasts? Lay we our slain  
In earth and mourn a day. We who outlive  
The cruel combat should refresh ourselves 275  
With food and wine, that we may steadily  
Maintain in arms the conflict with the foe.  
And then let no man idly wait to hear  
A further call to war, — for it will come  
Freighted with evil to the man who skulks 280  
Among the ships, — but let us all go forth  
To wage fierce battle with the knights of Troy.”



He spake, and summoned to his side the sons  
Of glorious Nestor, and Meriones,  
And Meges, son of Phyleus, and with them 285  
Thoas, and Lycomedes, Creon's son,  
And Melanippus. Straight they took their way  
To Agamemnon's tent, and there their task  
Was done as quickly as the word was given.  
They brought seven tripods forth, the promised gifts, 290  
And twenty burnished caldrons, and twelve steeds,  
And led away seven graceful women trained  
In household arts,—the maid with rosy cheeks,  
Briseis, was the eighth. Ulysses came,  
Leading the way, and bearing, duly weighed, 295  
Ten talents, all of gold. The Achaian youths  
Followed, and placed the presents in the midst  
Of that assembly. Agamemnon rose;  
And then Talthybius, who was like a god  
In power of voice, came near and took his place 300  
Beside the monarch, holding in his hands  
A boar. The son of Atreus drew a knife,  
Which hung by the great scabbard of his sword,  
And, cutting off the forelock of the boar,  
Prayed with uplifted hands to Jupiter: 305  
Meantime the Greeks in silence kept their seats,  
And, as became them, listened to the king,

Who looked into the sky above, and said:—

“Now first bear witness, Jove, of all the gods  
Greatest and best, and also Earth and Sun, 310  
And Furies dwelling under Earth, who take  
Vengeance on men forsworn, that never I  
Have laid, for purpose of unchaste desire,  
Or other cause, my hand upon the maid  
Briseis. She hath dwelt inviolate 315  
Within my tents. If yet in aught I say  
Lurk perjury, then may the blessed gods  
Heap on my head the many miseries  
With which they punish those who falsely swear!”

He spake, and drew the unrelenting blade 320  
Across the animal's throat. Talthybius took  
And swung the carcass round, and cast it forth  
Into the gray sea's depths, to be the food  
Of fishes. Then again Achilles rose  
Among the warlike sons of Greece, and said:— 325

“Great sorrows thou dost send, O Father Jove!  
Upon mankind; for never would the son  
Of Atreus have provoked the wrath that burned  
Within my bosom, never would have thought  
To bear away the maiden from my tent 330  
In spite of me, had it not been the will

Of Jupiter that many a Greek should die.  
But banquet now, and then prepare for war.”

So spake Achilles, and at once dissolved  
The assembly, each repairing to his ship 335  
Save the large-hearted Myrmidons, who still  
Were busy with the gifts, and carried them  
Toward their great general's galley. These they laid  
Carefully in the tents, and seated there  
The women, while the attentive followers drave 340  
The coursers to the stables. When the maid  
Briseis, beautiful as Venus, saw  
Patroclus lying gashed with wounds, she sprang  
And threw herself upon the dead, and tore  
Her bosom, her fair cheeks and delicate neck; 345  
And thus the graceful maiden, weeping, said:—

“Patroclus, dear to my unhappy heart!  
I left thee in full life, when from this tent  
They led me; I return and find thee dead,  
O chieftain of the people! Thus it is 350  
That sorrow upon sorrow is my lot.  
Him to whose arms my father, in my youth,  
And gracious mother gave me as a bride,  
I saw before our city pierced and slain,  
And the three brothers whom my mother bore 355

Slain also,—brothers whom I dearly loved.  
Yet thou, when swift Achilles struck to earth  
My hapless husband, and laid waste the town  
Of godlike Mynes, wouldst not suffer me  
To weep despairingly; for thou didst give 360  
Thy word to make me yet the wedded wife  
Of great Achilles, bear me in the fleet  
To Phthia, and prepare the wedding feast  
Among the Myrmidons. O ever kind!  
I mourn thy death, and cannot be consoled.” 365

Weeping she spake; the women wept with her,  
Seemingly for the dead, but each, in truth,  
For her own griefs. Meanwhile the elders came  
Around Achilles, praying him to join  
The banquet, but the chief, with sighs, refused. 370

“Dear comrades, if ye love me, do not thus  
Press me to sit and feast. A mighty woe  
Weighs down my spirit; it is my resolve  
To wait and bear until the setting sun.”

So saying, he dismissed the other kings. 375  
The sons of Atreus, and the high-born chief  
Ulysses, Nestor, and Idomeneus,  
And Phœnix, aged knight, alone remained,  
And anxiously they sought to comfort him

In his great grief; but comfort would he none 380  
Ere entering the red jaws of war. He drew  
Deep sighs, and, thinking on Patroclus, spake:—  
    “The time has been when thou too, hapless one,  
Dearest of all my comrades, wouldst have spread  
With diligent speed before me in my tent 385  
A genial banquet, while the Greeks prepared  
For desperate battle with the knights of Troy.  
Thou liest now a mangled corse, and I,  
Through grief for thee, refrain from food and drink,  
Though they are near. No worse calamity 390  
Could light on me, not even should I hear  
News of my father’s death, who haply now  
Tenderly mourns with tears his absent son  
In Phthia, while upon a foreign coast  
I wage for hated Helen’s sake the war 395  
Against the Trojans; or were I to hear  
Tidings that my beloved son had died,  
The noble Neoptolemus, who now,  
If living, is in Scyros, growing up  
To manhood. Once the hope was in my heart 400  
That I alone should perish here at Troy,  
Far from the Argive pastures full of steeds,  
And thou return to Phthia and bring home

My son from Scyros in thy ship, and show  
The youth my wealth, my servants, and my halls, 405  
High-roofed and spacious. For my mind misgives  
That Peleus either lives not, or endures  
A painful age, and hardly lives, yet waits  
To hear the sorrowful news that I am slain."

So spake he weeping, and the elders sighed 410  
To see his tears, as each recalled to mind  
Those whom he left at home, while Saturn's son  
Beheld their grief with pity, and bespake  
His daughter Pallas thus with wingèd words:—

"My child, wilt thou desert that valiant man? 415  
And shall Achilles be no more thy care?  
Lo, by his ships, before their lofty prows,  
He sits, lamenting his beloved friend.  
The rest are at the banquet; he remains  
Apart from them, and fasting. Hasten thou; 420  
With nectar and ambrosial sweets refresh  
His frame, that hunger overtake him not."

As thus he spake he sent the goddess forth  
Eager to do her errand. Plunging down,  
In form a shrill-voiced harpy with broad wings, 425  
She cleft the air. The Greeks throughout the camp  
Were putting on their armor. She infused

Into the hero's frame ambrosial sweets  
And nectar, that his limbs might not grow faint  
With hunger. Then the goddess sought again 430  
The stable mansion of Almighty Jove,  
While all the Greeks came pouring from the fleet.

As when the flakes of snow fall thick from heaven,  
Driven by the north wind sweeping on the clouds  
Before it, so from out the galleys came 435  
Helms crowding upon helms that glittered fair,  
Strong hauberks, bossy shields, and ashen spears.  
The gleam of armor brightened heaven and earth,  
And mighty was the sound of trampling feet.  
Amidst them all the great Achilles stood, 440  
Putting his armor on; he gnashed his teeth;  
His eyes shot fire; a grief too sharp to bear  
Was in his heart, as, filled with rage against  
The men of Troy, he cased his limbs in mail,  
The gift of Vulcan, from whose diligent hand 445  
It came. And first about his legs he clasped  
The beautiful greaves, with silver fastenings,  
Fitted the corselet to his bosom next,  
And from his shoulders hung the brazen sword  
With silver studs, and then he took the shield, 450  
Massive and broad, whose brightness streamed as far

As the moon's rays. And as at sea the light  
Of beacon, blazing in some lonely spot  
By night, upon a mountain summit, shines  
To mariners whom the tempest's force has driven 453  
Far from their friends across the fishy deep,  
So from that glorious buckler of the son  
Of Peleus, nobly wrought, a radiance streamed  
Into the sky. And then he raised and placed  
Upon his head the impenetrable helm 460  
With horse-hair plume. It glittered like a star,  
And all the shining tufts of golden thread,  
With which the maker's hand had thickly set  
Its cone, were shaken. Next the high-born chief  
Tried his new arms, to know if they were well 465  
Adjusted to his shape, and left his limbs  
Free play. They seemed like wings, and lifted up  
The shepherd of the people. Then he drew  
From its ancestral sheath his father's spear,  
Heavy and huge and tough. No man of all 470  
The Grecian host could wield that weapon save  
Achilles only. 'T was a Pelian ash,  
Which Chiron for his father had cut down  
On Pelion's highest peak, to be the death  
Of heroes. Meantime, busy with the steeds, 475



Automedon and Alcimus put on  
Their trappings and their yoke, and round their necks  
Bound the fair collars, thrust into their mouths  
The bit, and backward drew the reins to meet  
The well-wrought chariot. Then Automedon 480  
Took in his hand the showy lash, and leaped  
Into the seat. Behind him, all equipped  
For war, Achilles mounted, in a blaze  
Of arms that dazzled like the sun, and thus  
Called to his father's steeds with terrible voice:— 485  
    “Xanthus and Balius, whom Podargè bore,—  
A noble stock,—I charge you to bring back  
Into the Grecian camp, the battle done,  
Him whom ye now are bearing to the field,  
Nor leave him, as ye left Patroclus, dead.” 490  
    Swift-footed Xanthus from beneath the yoke  
Answered him with bowed head and drooping mane  
That, flowing through the yoke-ring swept the ground,—  
For Juno gave him then the power of speech:—  
    “For this one day, at least, we bear thee safe, 495  
O fiery chief, Achilles! but the hour  
Of death draws nigh to thee, nor will the blame  
Be ours; a mighty god and cruel fate  
Ordain it. Not through our neglect or sloth

Did they of Troy strip off thy glorious arms                   500  
From slain Patroclus. That invincible god,  
The son of golden-haired Latona, smote  
The hero in the foremost ranks, and gave  
Glory to Hector. Even though our speed  
Were that of Zephyr, fleetest of the winds,                   505  
Yet certain is thy doom to be o'ercome  
In battle by a god and by a man."

Thus far he spake, and then the Furies checked  
His further speech. Achilles, swift of foot,  
Replied in anger: "Xanthus, why foretell                   510  
My death? It is not needed; well I know  
My fate,—that here I perish, far away  
From Peleus and my mother. I shall fight  
Till I have made the Trojans sick of war."

He spake, and, shouting to his firm-paced steeds,                   515  
Drove them, among the foremost, toward the war.

*BOOK XX.*

THUS, O Pelides, did the sons of Greece,  
Impatient for the battle, arm themselves,  
By their beaked ships, around thee. Opposite,  
Upon a height that rose amidst the plain,  
The Trojans waited. Meantime Jupiter 5  
Sent Themis from the Olympian summit, ploughed  
With dells, to summon all the immortal ones  
To council. Forth she went from place to place,  
Bidding them to the palace halls of Jove.  
Then none of all the Rivers failed to join 10  
The assembly, save Oceanus, and none  
Of all the Nymphs were absent whose abode  
Is in the pleasant groves and river-founts  
And grassy meadows. When they reached the halls  
Of Cloud-compelling Jove they sat them down 15  
On shining thrones, divided each from each  
By polished columns, wrought for Father Jove  
By Vulcan's skill. Thus all to Jove's abode

Were gathered. Neptune had not disobeyed  
The call. He left the sea, and took his seat 20  
Among them, and inquired the will of Jove.

“Why, wielder of the lightning, dost thou call  
The gods again to council? Do thy plans  
Concern the Greeks and Trojans? For the war  
Between their hosts will be rekindled soon.” 25

And thus the Cloud-compeller Jove replied:  
“Thou who dost shake the shores, thou knowest well  
The purpose of my mind, and for whose sake  
I call this council. Though so soon to die,  
They are my care. Yet will I keep my place, 30  
Seated upon the Olympian mount, and look  
Calmly upon the conflict. All of you  
Depart, and aid the Trojans or the Greeks,  
As it may list you. For should Peleus’ son  
Alone do battle with the men of Troy, 35  
Their squadrons could not stand before the assault  
Of the swift-footed warrior for an hour.  
Beforetime, at the sight of him they fled,  
O’ercome with fear, and now, when he is roused  
To rage by his companion’s death, I fear 40  
Lest, though it be against the will of fate,  
He level with the ground the walls of Troy.”

Saturnius spake, and moved the hosts to join  
In desperate conflict. All the gods went forth  
To mingle with the war on different sides. 45  
Juno and Pallas hastened to the fleet  
With Neptune, he who makes the earth to shake,  
And Hermes, god of useful arts, and shrewd  
In forecast. Vulcan also went with them,  
Strong and stern-eyed, yet lame, his feeble legs 50  
Moving with labor. To the Trojan side  
Went crested Mars, Apollo with his locks  
Unshorn, Diana mighty with the bow,  
Latona, Xanthus, and the Queen of smiles,  
Venus; for while the gods remained apart 55  
From men, the Achaian host was high in hope  
Because Achilles, who so long had left  
The war, now reappeared upon the field,  
And terror shook the limbs of every son  
Of Troy when he beheld the swift of foot, 60  
Pelides, terrible as Mars—that curse  
Of human-kind—in glittering arms again.  
But when the dwellers of Olympus joined  
The crowd of mortals, Discord, who makes mad  
The nations, rose and raged; Minerva raised 65  
Her war-cry from the trench without the wall,

And then she shouted from the sounding shore;  
While, like a cloudy whirlwind, opposite,  
Moved Mars, and fiercely yelled, encouraging  
The men of Troy, as on the city heights 70  
He stood, or paced with rapid steps the hill  
Beside the Simoïs, called the Beautiful.

Thus, kindling hate between the hosts, the gods  
Engaged, and hideous was the strife that rose  
Among them. From above, with terrible crash, 75  
Thundered the father of the blessed gods  
And mortal men, while Neptune from below  
Shook the great earth and lofty mountain peaks.  
Then watery Ida's heights and very roots,  
The city of Troy, and the Greek galleys, quaked. 80  
Then Pluto, ruler of the nether world,  
Leaped from his throne in terror, lest the god  
Who makes the earth to tremble, cleaving it  
Above him, should lay bare to gods and men  
His horrible abodes, the dismal haunts 85  
Which even the gods abhor. Such tumult filled  
The field of battle when the immortals joined  
The conflict. Then against King Neptune stood  
Phœbus Apollo, with his wingèd shafts,  
And Pallas, goddess of the azure eyes, 90

Confronted Mars. Encountering Juno came  
The sister of Apollo, archer-queen  
And huntress, Dian of the golden bow.  
The helpful Hermes, god of useful arts,  
Opposed Latona, and the mighty stream  
Called Xanthus by the immortals, but by men  
Scamander, with his eddies strong and deep,  
Stood face to face with Vulcan in the field.

95

So warred the gods with gods. Meantime the son  
Of Peleus, ranging through the thick of fight,  
Sought only Hector, Priam's son, whose blood  
He meant to pour to greedy Mars, the god  
Of carnage. But Apollo, who impels  
Warriors to battle, stirred Æneas up  
To meet Pelides. First he filled his heart  
With resolute valor, and then took the voice  
Of Priam's son, Lycaon. In his shape  
Thus spake Apollo, son of Jupiter:—

100

105

“Æneas, prince of Troy, where now are all  
The boasts which thou hast made before the chiefs  
Of Troy at banquets, that thou yet wouldst meet  
Pelides in the combat hand to hand?”

110

Æneas made reply: “Priamides,  
Why dost thou bid me, when thou knowest me

Unwilling, meet in combat Peleus' son, 115  
The mighty among men? It will not be  
For the first time if I confront him now.  
He chased me once from Ida with his spear, —  
Me and my fellows, when he took our herds 120  
And laid Lyrnessus waste and Pedasus.  
But Jove, who gave me strength and nimble feet,  
Preserved me; I had else been slain by him  
And by Minerva, for the goddess went  
Before him, giving him the victory  
And moving him to slay the Leleges 125  
And Trojans with the brazen spear he bore.  
'T is not for mortal man to fight the son  
Of Peleus, at whose side there ever stands  
One of the immortal gods, averting harm.  
And then his weapon flies right on, nor stops 130  
Until it bites the flesh. Yet were the god  
To weigh the victory in an equal scale,  
Achilles would not vanquish me with ease,  
Though he might boast his frame were all of brass."

Then spake the king Apollo, son of Jove: 135  
"Pray, warrior, to the eternal gods. They say  
That Venus gave thee birth, who has her own  
From Jove. His mother is of lower rank



Than thine. Thine is a child of Jove, but his  
A daughter of the Ancient of the Deep. 140  
Strike at him with that conquering spear of thine,  
Nor let him scare thee with stern words and threats."

He said, and breathed into the prince's breast  
Fresh valor, as, arrayed in glittering arms,  
He pressed to where the foremost warriors fought; 145  
Yet not unseen by Juno's eye went forth  
The son of old Anchises. She convened  
The gods in council, and addressed them thus:—

"Neptune and Pallas, what shall now be done?  
Consider ye. Æneas, all arrayed 150  
In glittering arms, is pressing on to meet  
Pelides. Phœbus sends him. Let us join  
To turn him back, or let some one of us  
Stand near Achilles, fill his limbs with strength,  
Nor let his heart grow faint, but let him see 155  
That we, the mightiest of the immortals, look  
On him with favor, and that those who strive  
Amid the war and bloodshed to protect  
The sons of Troy are empty boasters all.  
For this we came from heaven to interpose 160  
In battle, that Achilles may endure  
No harm from Trojan hands, although, no doubt,

Hereafter he must suffer all that Fate  
Spun for him when his mother brought him forth.  
But if he hear not, from some heavenly voice, 165  
Of this assurance, fear may fall on him  
When, haply, in the battle he shall meet  
Some god; for when revealed to human sight  
The presence of the gods is terrible."

And then did Neptune, he who shakes the earth, 170  
Make answer: "Juno, it becomes thee ill  
To be so greatly vexed. I cannot wish  
A contest with the other gods, though we  
In power excel them. Rather let us sit  
Apart, where we can look upon the war, 175  
And leave it to mankind. And yet, if Mars  
Or Phœbus should begin the fight, or seek  
To thwart Achilles or restrain his arm,  
There will be cause for us to join the strife  
In earnest, and I deem that they full soon, 180  
The contest ended, will return to join  
The assembled gods upon the Olympian mount,  
Forced to withdraw by our all-potent hands."

So spake the dark-haired god, and led the way  
To the high mound of godlike Hercules, 185  
Raised from the earth by Trojans, with the aid

Of Pallas, that the hero there might find  
A refuge when the monster of the deep  
Should chase him from the sea-beach to the plain.  
With other gods beside him Neptune there 190  
Sat down and drew a shadow, which no sight  
Could pierce, around their shoulders. Other gods,  
Upon the hill called Beautiful, were grouped  
Round thee, Apollo, archer-god, and Mars,  
Spoiler of cities. On both sides they sat, 195  
Devising plans, unwilling to begin  
The fierce encounter, though Almighty Jove  
From where he sat in heaven commanded it.

The warriors thronged into the field, which shone  
With brazen armor and caparisons 200  
Of steeds; earth trembled with the sounding tramp  
Of marching squadrons. From the opposing ranks  
Two chieftains, each the bravest of his host,  
Impatient to engage, — Anchises' son, .  
Æneas, and the great Achilles, — came. 205  
And first Æneas, with defiant mien  
And nodding casque, stood forth. He held his shield  
Before him, which he wielded right and left,  
And shook his brazen spear. On the other side,  
Pelides hurried toward him, terrible 210

As is a lion, which the assembled hinds  
 Of a whole village chase and seek to slay,  
 While on he stalks, contemning their assault;  
 But if the arrow of some strong-armed youth  
 Have smitten him, he stands, and gathers all 215  
 His strength to spring, with open jaws and teeth  
 Half hid in foam, and uttering fearful growls  
 From his deep chest; he lashes with his tail  
 His sides and sinewy thighs to rouse himself  
 To combat, and then, grimly frowning, leaps 220  
 To slay, or by the foremost youths be slain,  
 So sprang Achilles, moved by his bold heart  
 To meet the brave Æneas. As the twain  
 Drew near each other, the swift-footed chief,  
 The great Achilles, was the first to speak:— 225  
 “Why, O Æneas, hast thou come so far  
 Through this vast crowd to seek me? Does thy heart  
 Bid thee confront me in the hope to gain  
 The place which Priam holds, and to bear rule  
 Over the knights of Troy? Yet shouldst thou take 230  
 My life, think not that Priam in thy hand  
 Will place such large reward. He has his sons,  
 Nor is he fickle, but of stable mind.  
 Or will the Trojans, if thou slayest me,

Bestow on thee broad acres, of a soil 235  
Fruitful exceedingly, and suited well  
To vines or to the plough, which thou mayst till?  
That also, as I hope, thou wilt obtain  
With difficulty; for, unless I err,  
I forced thee once to flee before my spear. 240  
Dost thou remember, when thou wert alone  
Among thy beeves, I drave thee, running fast,  
Down Ida's steeps? Then didst thou never turn  
To face me, but didst seek a hiding-place  
Within Lyrnessus, which I also took 245  
And wasted, with the aid of Father Jove  
And Pallas. From the town I led away  
The women, never to be free again.  
Jove and the other gods protected thee  
That day. Yet will they not protect thee now, 250  
As thou dost vainly hope. Withstand me not,  
I counsel thee, but hide thyself among  
The crowd before thou suffer harm, for he  
Who sees past evils only is a fool."  
And then Æneas answered: "Do not think, 255  
Pelides, with such words to frighten me,  
As if I were a beardless boy. I too  
Might use reproach and taunt; but well we know

Each other's birth and lineage, through report  
Of men, although by sight I know not thine, 260  
Nor know'st thou mine. They say that thou art sprung  
From Peleus the renowned, and from the nymph  
Of ocean, fair-haired Thetis, while I boast  
My birth from brave Anchises, and can claim  
Venus as mother. Two of these to-day 265  
Must weep the death of a beloved son,  
For we are not to part, I think, nor end  
The combat after a few childish words;  
Yet let me speak, that thou mayst better know  
Our lineage, known already far and wide. 270  
Jove was the father, Cloud-compelling Jove,  
Of Dardanus, by whom Dardania first  
Was peopled, ere our sacred Troy was built  
On the great plain,—a populous town; for men  
Dwelt still upon the roots of Ida fresh 275  
With many springs. To Dardanus was born  
King Erichthonius, richest in his day  
Of mortal men, and in his meadows grazed  
Three thousand mares, exulting in their brood  
Of tender foals. Of some of this vast herd 280  
Boreas became enamored as they fed.  
He came to them in likeness of a steed

That wore an azure mane, and they brought forth  
Twelve foals, which all were females, of such speed  
That when they frolicked on the teeming earth 285  
They flew along the topmost ears of wheat  
And broke them not, and when they sported o'er  
The mighty bosom of the deep they ran  
Along the hoary summits of its waves.  
To Erichthonius Tros was born, who ruled 290  
The Trojans, and from Tros there sprang three sons  
Of high renown, — Ilus, Assaracus,  
And godlike Ganymede, most beautiful  
Of men; the gods beheld and caught him up  
To heaven, so beautiful was he, to pour 295  
The wine to Jove, and ever dwell with them.  
And Ilus had a son, Laomedon,  
Of mighty fame, to whom five sons were born,  
Tithonus, Priam, Lampus, Clytius,  
And Hicetaon, trained to war by Mars. 300  
Assaracus begat my ancestor,  
Capys, to whom Anchises owes his birth.  
Anchises is my father; Priam's son  
Is noble Hector. Such I claim to be  
My lineage and my blood; but Jove at will 305  
Gives in large measure, or diminishes,

Men's warlike prowess; and the power of Jove  
Is over all. But let us talk no more  
Of things like these, as if we were but boys,  
While here in the mid-field we stand between 310  
The warring armies. Both of us might cast  
Reproaches at each other, many and foul,  
Such as no galley of a hundred oars  
Could bear and float. Men's tongues are voluble,  
And endless are the modes of speech, and far 315  
Extends from side to side the field of words.  
Such as thou utterest it will be thy lot  
To hear from others. But what profits it  
For us to rail and wrangle, in high brawl,  
Like women angered to the quick, that rush 320  
Into the middle of the street and scold  
With furious words, some true and others false,  
As rage may prompt them? Me thou shalt not move  
With words from my firm purpose ere thou raise  
Thy arm against me. Let us hasten first 325  
To prove the temper of our brazen spears."

He spake, and hurled his brazen spear to smite  
The dreadful shield, a terror in men's eyes;  
That mighty buckler rang with the strong blow.  
Achilles, as it came, held forth his shield 330



With nervous arm far from him, for he feared  
That the long javelin of his valiant foe  
Might pierce it. Idle fear; he had not thought  
That the bright armor given him by the gods  
Not easily would yield to force of man. 335  
Nor could the rapid spear that left the hand  
Of brave Æneas pierce the shield; the gold,  
The gift of Vulcan, stopped it. Through two folds  
It went, but three remained; for Vulcan's skill  
Fenced with five folds the disk,—the outer two 340  
Of brass, the inner two of tin; between  
Was one of gold, and there the brazen spear  
Was stayed. And then in turn Achilles threw  
His ponderous spear, and struck the orbèd shield  
Borne by Æneas near the upper edge, 345  
Where thinnest was the brass and thinnest lay  
The bullock's hide. The Pelian ash broke through;  
The buckler crashed; Æneas, stooping low,  
Held it above him, terrified; the spear,  
Tearing both plate and hide of that huge shield, 350  
Passed over him, and, eager to go on,  
Plunged in the earth and stood. He, when he saw  
The massive lance which he had just escaped  
Fixed in the earth so near him, stood awhile

As struck with fear, and with despairing looks. 355  
Achilles drew his trenchant sword and rushed  
With fury on Æneas, uttering  
A fearful shout. Æneas lifted up  
A stone, a mighty weight, which no two men,  
As men are now, could raise, yet easily 360  
He wielded it. Æneas then, to save  
His threatened life, had smitten with the stone  
His adversary's buckler or his helm,  
And with his sword Pelides had laid dead  
The Trojan, had not he who shakes the earth, 365  
Neptune, beheld him in that perilous hour,  
And instantly addressed the immortal gods:—  
    “My heart, ye gods, is heavy for the sake  
Of the great-souled Æneas, who will sink  
To Hades overcome by Peleus' son. 370  
Rash man! he listened to the archer-god  
Apollo, who has now no power to save  
The chief from death. But, guiltless as he is,  
Why should he suffer evil for the wrong  
Of others? He has always sought to please 375  
With welcome offerings the gods who dwell  
In the broad heaven. Let us withdraw him, then,  
From this great peril, lest, if he should fall

Before Achilles, haply Saturn's son  
May be displeased. And 't is the will of fate 380  
That he escape; that so the Dardan race,  
Beloved by Jove above all others sprung  
From him and mortal women, may not yet  
Perish from earth and leave no progeny.  
For Saturn's son already holds the house 385  
Of Priam in disfavor, and will make  
Æneas ruler o'er the men of Troy,  
And his sons' sons shall rule them after him."

Imperial Juno with large eyes replied:  
"Determine, Neptune, for thyself, and save 390  
Æneas, or, all blameless as he is,  
Abandon him to perish by the hand  
Of Peleus' son, Achilles. We have sworn—  
Minerva and myself—that never we  
Would aid in aught the Trojans to escape 395  
Their day of ruin, though the town of Troy  
Sink to the dust in the destroying flames,—  
Flames kindled by the warlike sons of Greece."

And then did Neptune, shaker of the shores,  
Go forth into the battle and amidst 400  
The clash of spears, and come where stood the chiefs,  
Æneas and his mighty foe, the son

Of Peleus. Instantly he caused to rise  
A darkness round the eyes of Peleus' son,  
And from the buckler of Æneas drew 405  
The spear with ashen stem and brazen blade,  
And laid it at Achilles' feet, and next  
He lifted high Æneas from the ground  
And bore him thence. O'er many a warrior's head,  
And many a harnessed steed, Æneas flew, 420  
Hurled by the god, until he reached the rear  
Of that fierce battle, where the Caucons stood  
Arrayed for war. The shaker of the shores  
Drew near, and said to him in wingèd words:—  
“What god, Æneas, moved thee to defy 425  
Madly the son of Peleus, who in might  
Excels thee, and is dearer to the gods?  
Whenever he encounters thee in arms  
Give way, lest thou, against the will of fate,  
Pass down to Hades. When he shall have met 430  
His fate and perished, thou mayst boldly dare  
To face the foremost of the enemy;  
No other of the Greeks shall take thy life.”  
He spake, and having thus admonished him  
He left Æneas there, and suddenly 435  
Swept off the darkness that so thickly rose

Around Achilles, who, with sight now clear,  
Looked forth, and, sighing, said to his great soul:—

“How strange is this! My eyes have seen to-day

A mighty marvel. Here the spear I flung

430

Is lying on the earth, and him at whom

I cast it, in the hope to take his life,

I see no longer. Well beloved, no doubt,

Is this Æneas by the immortal gods.

Yet that, I thought, was but an empty boast

435

Of his. Well, let him go; I cannot think

That he who gladly fled from death will find

The courage to encounter me again.

And now will I exhort the Greeks to fight

This battle bravely, while I go to prove

440

The prowess of the other chiefs of Troy.”

He spake, and, cheering on the soldiery,

He sprang into the ranks: “Ye noble Greeks,

Avoid no more the Trojans; press right on.

Let each man single out his man, and fight

445

With eager heart. ’T is hard for me to chase,

With all my warlike might, so many men,

And fight with all. Not even Mars, the god,

Although immortal, nor Minerva’s self,

Could combat with so vast a multitude

450

Unwearied; yet whatever I can do,  
With hands and feet and strength, I give my word  
Not to decline, or be remiss in aught.  
I go to range the Trojan files, where none,  
I think, will gladly stand to meet my spear." 455

Such stirring words he uttered, while aloud  
Illustrious Hector called, encouraging  
The men of Troy, and promising to meet  
Achilles: "Valiant Trojans, do not quail  
Before Pelides. In the strife of words 460  
I too might bear my part against the gods;  
But harder were the combat with the spear,  
For greater is their might than ours. The son  
Of Peleus cannot make his threatenings good.  
A part will he perform and part will leave 465  
Undone. I go to wait him; I would go  
Although his hands were like consuming flame, —  
His hands like flame, his strength the strength of steel."

He spake: the Trojans at his stirring words  
Lifted their lances, and the adverse hosts 470  
Joined battle with a fearful din. Then came  
Apollo and admonished Hector thus: —

"Hector, encounter not Achilles here  
Before the armies, but amidst the throng

And tumult of the battle, lest perchance  
He strike thee with the javelin or the sword.” 475

He spake: the Trojan chief, dismayed to hear  
The warning of the god, withdrew among  
The crowded ranks. Meantime Achilles sprang  
Upon the Trojans with a terrible cry, 480  
And slew a leader of the host, the brave  
Iphition, whom a Naiad, at the foot  
Of snowy Tmolus, in the opulent vale  
Of Hyda, bore to the great conqueror  
Of towns, Otrynteus. As he came in haste, 485  
The noble son of Peleus with his spear  
Smote him upon the forehead in the midst,  
And cleft the head in two. He fell; his arms  
Clashed, and Achilles boasted o’er him thus:—

“Son of Otrynteus, terrible in arms, 490  
Thou art brought low; thou meetest here thy death,  
Though thou wert born by the Gygæan lake  
Where lie, by fishy Hyllus and the stream  
Of eddying Hermus, thy paternal fields.”

Thus boastfully he spake, while darkness came 495  
Over Iphition’s eyes, and underneath  
The chariots of the Greeks who foremost fought  
His corse was mangled. Next Achilles smote

Antenor's son, Demoleon, gallantly  
Breasting the onset of the Greeks. He pierced 500  
His temple through the helmet's brazen cheek ;  
The brass stayed not the blow ; the eager spear  
Brake through the bone, and crushed the brain within,  
And the brave youth lay dead. Achilles next  
Struck down Hippodamas ; he pierced his back 505  
As, leaping from his car, the Phrygian fled  
Before him. With a moan he breathed away  
His life, as moans a bull when dragged around  
The altar of the Heliconian king  
By youths on whom the god that shakes the earth 510  
Looks down well pleased. With such a moaning sound  
The fiery spirit left the Phrygian's frame.

Then sprang Achilles with his spear to slay  
The godlike Polydorus, Priam's son,  
Whose father bade him not to join the war, 515  
For he was younger than the other sons,  
And dearest of them all. In speed of foot  
He had no peer. Yet, with a boyish pride  
To show his swiftness, in the foremost ranks  
He ranged the field, until he lost his life. 520  
Him with a javelin the swift-footed son  
Of Peleus smote as he was hurrying by.



The weapon pierced the middle of his back,  
Where, by its golden rings, the belt was clasped  
Above the double corselet; the keen blade 535  
Came forth in front; the Trojan with a cry  
Fell forward on his knees, and, bending, clasped  
His bowels in his hands. When Hector saw  
His brother thus upon the earth, there came  
A darkness o'er his eyes, nor could he bear 530  
Longer to stand aloof, but, brandishing  
His spear, came forward like a rushing flame  
To meet the son of Peleus, who beheld  
And bounded toward him, saying boastfully:  
"So, he is near whose hand hath given my heart 535  
Its deepest wound, who slew my dearest friend.  
No more are we to shun each other now,  
Timidly stealing through the paths of war."  
And then he said to Hector with a frown:  
"Draw nearer, that thou mayst the sooner die." 540  
The crested Hector, undismayed, replied:  
"Pelides, do not hope with empty words  
To frighten me, as if I were a boy.  
Insults and taunts I could with ease return.  
I know that thou art brave; I know that I 545  
In might am not thy equal; but the event

Rests in the laps of the great gods, and they  
May, though I lack thy prowess, give thy life  
Into my hands when I shall cast my spear.  
The weapon that I bear is keen like thine."

550

Thus having spoken, brandishing his spear,  
He sent it forth; but with a gentle breath  
Minerva turned it from the glorious Greek,  
And laid it at the noble Hector's feet.

Then did Achilles, resolute to slay

555

His enemy, rush against him with a shout  
Of fury; but Apollo, with such power  
As gods put forth, withdrew him thence, and spread  
A darkness round him. Thrice the swift of foot,  
Achilles, rushed against him with his spear,  
And thrice he smote the cloud. But when once more,  
In godlike might, he made the assault, he spake  
These wingèd words of menace and reproach:—

560

"Hound as thou art, thou hast once more escaped  
Thy death; for it was near. Again the hand  
Of Phœbus rescues thee; to him thy vows  
Are made ere thou dost trust thyself amidst  
The clash of javelins. I shall meet thee yet  
And end thee utterly, if any god  
Favor me also. I will now pursue

565

570


And strike the other Trojan warriors down."

He spake, and in the middle of the neck  
Smote Dryops with his spear. The Phrygian fell  
Before him at his feet. He left him there,  
And wounding with his spear Philetor's son, 575  
Demuchus, tall and valiant, in the knee,  
Stayed him until he slew him with his sword.  
Then from their chariot to the ground he cast  
Laogonus and Dardanus, the sons  
Of Bias, piercing with a javelin one, 580  
And cutting down the other with his sword.

And Tros, Alastor's son, who came to him  
And clasped his knees, in hope that he would spare  
A captive,—spare his life, nor slay a youth  
Of his own age,—vain hope! he little knew 585  
That not by prayers Achilles could be moved,  
Nor was he pitiful, nor mild of mood,  
But hard of heart,—while Tros embraced his knees  
And passionately sued, Pelides thrust  
His sword into his side; the liver came 590  
Forth at the wound; the dark blood gushing filled  
The Phrygian's bosom; o'er his eyes there crept  
A darkness, and his life was at an end.

Approaching Mulius next, Achilles smote

The warrior at the ear; the brazen point 595  
Passed through the other ear; and then he slew  
Agenor's son, Echeclus, letting fall  
His heavy-hilted sword upon his head  
Just in the midst; the blade grew warm with blood,  
And gloomy death and unrelenting fate 600  
Darkened the victim's eyes. Achilles next  
Wounded Deucalion, thrusting through his arm  
The brazen javelin, where the sinews met  
That strung the elbow. While with powerless arm  
The wounded Trojan stood awaiting death, 605  
Achilles drave his falchion through his neck.  
Far flew the head and helm, the marrow flowed  
From out the spine, and stretched upon the ground  
Deucalion lay. Pelides still went on,  
O'ertaking Rigmus, the renownèd son 610  
Of Peireus, from the fruitful fields of Thrace,  
And smote him in the stomach with his lance.  
There hung the weapon fixed; the wounded man  
Fell from the car. At Areïthoüs  
The charioteer, who turned his steeds to flee, 615  
Achilles sent his murderous lance, and pierced  
His back, and dashed him from the car, and left  
His horses wild with fright. As when, among



The deep dells of an arid mountain-side,  
A great fire burns its way, and the thick wood 620  
Before it is consumed, and shifting winds  
Hither and thither sweep the flames, so ranged  
Achilles in his fury through the field  
From side to side, and everywhere o'ertook  
His victims, and the earth ran dark with blood. 625

As when a yeoman underneath the yoke  
Brings his broad-fronted oxen to tread out  
White barley on the level threshing-floor,  
The sheaves are quickly trodden small beneath  
The heavy footsteps of the bellowing beasts, 630  
So did the firm-paced coursers, which the son  
Of Peleus guided, trample with their feet  
Bucklers and corpses, while beneath the car  
Blood steeped the axle, and the chariot-seat  
Dripped on its rim with blood, that from below 635  
Was splashed upon them by the horses' hoofs  
And by the chariot-wheels. Such havoc made  
Pelides in his ardor for renown,  
Till his invincible hands were foul with blood.

*BOOK XXI.*

**N**OW when they reached the pleasant banks through  
which

The eddying Xanthus runs, the river sprung  
From deathless Jove, Achilles drave his foes  
Asunder. Part he chased across the plain  
Townward, along the way by which the Greeks 5  
In terror fled the day before, pursued  
By glorious Hector. Panic-struck they ran  
Along that way, while, to restrain their flight,  
Before them Juno hung a veil of cloud,  
And darkness. Meanwhile half the flying crowd 10  
Leaped down to that deep stream and rolled among  
Its silver eddies. With a mighty noise  
They plunged; the torrent dashed; the banks around  
Remurmured shrilly to the cries of those  
Who floated struggling in the current's whirl, 15  
As when before the fierce, devouring flames  
A swarm of locusts, springing into air,

Fly toward a river, while the fire behind  
Crackles with sudden fierceness, and in fright  
They fall into the waves, the roaring stream 20  
Of the deep-eddied Xanthus thus was filled  
Before Achilles with a mingled crowd  
Of steeds and men. The Jove-descended man  
Left leaning on the tamarisks his spear  
Upon the river's border, and leaped in, 25  
Armed only with his sword, intent to deal  
Death on the fugitives; on every side  
He smote, and from the smitten by the sword  
Rose lamentable cries; the waves around  
Grew crimson with their blood. As when before 30  
A dolphin of huge bulk the fishes flee  
In fear, and crowd the creeks that lie around  
The sheltered haven,—for their foe devours  
All that he overtakes,—the Trojans thus  
Hid from his sight among the hollow rocks 35  
Beside the rushing river. When his hand  
Was weary with the work of death, he took  
Twelve youths alive, whose blood was yet to pay  
The penalty for Menœtiades,  
His slaughtered friend. He led them from the stream, 40  
Passive with fear like fawns, and tied their hands

Behind them with the well-twined cords that bound  
Their tunics. Then he gave them to his friends,  
Who led the captives to the roomy ships.

Again Achilles rushed upon the foe 45  
Intent on slaughter. One he met who climbed  
The river's bank, Dardanian Priam's son,  
Lycaon, whom in former days he made  
His captive, by surprise, when in the night  
He found him lopping with an axe the boughs 50  
Of a wild fig-tree, that the trunk might form  
The circle of a wheel. Achilles came,  
An unexpected foe, and bore him off  
To sea, and sold him in the populous isle  
Of Lemnos. He was bought by Jason's son, 55  
The Imbrian prince, Eëtion, who had been  
His host, and now redeemed him with large gifts,  
And sent him to Arisba's noble town.  
Yet thence he stole, and reached his father's house  
Again, and there made merry with his friends 60  
Eleven days, but on the twelfth a god  
Delivered him again into the hands  
Of Peleus' son, who now would send his soul  
Repining down to Hades. When the chief,  
The swift of foot, beheld him stand unarmed, 65



With neither helm nor shield nor spear,—for these  
He had thrown down,—faint with the sweaty toil  
Of clambering up the bank, and every limb  
Unstrung with weariness, then wrathfully  
Thus said Achilles to his mighty soul:—

70

“O strange! my eyes behold a miracle.  
Sure, the brave sons of Troy whom I have slain  
Will rise up from the nether darkness yet,  
Since this man, whom I once reprieved from death  
And sold in Lemnos the divine, comes back.  
Nor could the ocean’s gray abyss of brine,  
Beyond which many long in vain to pass,  
Detain him in that isle. But he shall taste  
The sharpness of my spear, that I may prove  
Whether he after that will reappear,  
And whether the kind earth, which holds so well  
The valiant dead, can keep him in her womb.”

75

80

So pondered he and stood. The Trojan drew  
Close to him, with intent to clasp his knees,  
Fear-struck, yet hoping to avoid the doom  
Of bitter death. The great Achilles raised  
His ponderous spear to strike. Lycaon stooped,  
And, darting underneath the weapon, seized  
The hero’s knees; behind him in the ground

85

The spear stood fixed, though eager yet for blood; 90  
One arm was round his adversary's knees,  
The other held—and would not let it go—  
The spear, while thus with wingèd words he prayed:—  
    “I clasp thy knees, Achilles; look on me  
Kindly and pity me, O foster-child 95  
Of Jove. I am thy suppliant, and may claim  
Thy mercy. I partook with thee the fruits  
Of Ceres, when amid my fruitful fields  
Thou madest me a captive, carrying me  
From friends and kindred to the sacred isle 100  
Of Lemnos. Thou didst sell me there,—my price  
A hundred beeves,—and thou shalt now receive,  
For ransom, thrice as many. It is yet  
But the twelfth morning since I came to Troy  
After much hardship, and a pitiless fate 105  
Betrays me to thy hands. I must believe  
That Father Jove in wrath delivers me  
To thee again. Laothoë brought me forth  
To a brief life; that mother was the child  
Of aged Altes,—Altes ruling o'er 110  
The warlike Leleges, by whom are tilled  
The heights of Pedasus, where Satnio flows,—  
And Priam wedded her with other maids.

She bore two children to be slain by thee;  
One was the godlike Polydore, whom thou 115  
Didst smite with thy keen spear, in the front rank  
Of those who fought on foot. His evil fate  
Must overtake me now, for, since a god  
Has brought me near thee, there is no escape.  
Yet let me tell thee this, and weigh it well, 120  
And let it save my life. I came not forth  
From the same womb with Hector, by whose hand  
Thy brave and gentle friend, Patroclus, died."

The illustrious son of Priam ended here  
His prayer, and heard a merciless reply:— 125

"Fool! never talk of ransom,—not a word.  
Before the evil day on which my friend  
Was slain, it pleased me oftentimes to spare  
The Trojans. Many a one I took alive  
And sold; but now no man of all their race, 130  
Whom any god may bring within my reach,  
Shall leave the field alive, and least of all  
The sons of Priam. Die thou, then; and why  
Shouldst thou, my friend, lament? Patroclus died,  
And greatly he excelled thee. Seest thou not 135  
How eminent in stature and in form  
Am I, whom to a prince renowned for worth

A goddess mother bore; yet will there come  
To me a violent death at morn, at eve,  
Or at the midday hour, whenever he 140  
Whose weapon is to take my life shall cast  
The spear or send an arrow from the string."

He spake: the Trojan's heart and knees grew faint;  
His hand let go the spear; he sat and cowered  
With outstretched arms. Achilles drew his sword, 145  
And smote his neck just at the collar-bone;  
The two-edged blade was buried deep. He fell  
Prone on the earth; the black blood spouted forth  
And steeped the soil. Achilles by the foot  
Flung him to float among the river-waves, 150  
And uttered, boastfully, these wingèd words:—

"Lie there among the fishes, who shall feed  
Upon thy blood unscared. No mother there  
Shall weep thee lying on thy bier; thy corpse  
Scamander shall bear down to the broad sea, 155  
Where, as he sees thee darkening its face,  
Some fish shall hasten, darting through the waves,  
To feed upon Lycaon's fair white limbs.  
So perish ye, till sacred Troy be ours,  
You fleeing, while I follow close and slay. 160  
This river cannot aid you,—this fair stream

With silver eddies, to whose deity  
 Ye offer many beeves in sacrifice,  
 And fling into its gulfs your firm-paced steeds;  
 But thus ye all shall perish, till I take 165  
 Full vengeance for Patroclus of the Greeks,  
 Whom, while I stood aloof from war, ye slew."

He spake: and, deeply moved with inward wrath,  
 The River pondered how to render vain  
 The prowess of Achilles, and avert 170  
 Destruction from the Trojans. Now the son  
 Of Peleus rushed, his ponderous spear in hand,  
 To slay Asteropæus, who was sprung  
 From Pelegon, and Pelegon was born  
 To the broad river Axius, of a maid, 175  
 The eldest-born of Accessamenus,  
 Named Peribœa; for the river-god  
 Was joined with her in love. Achilles sprang  
 To meet the youth, as, rising from the stream,  
 Armed with two spears, he stood, his heart made strong 180  
 And resolute by Xanthus, who had seen  
 Indignantly so many Trojans die,—  
 Youths whom Achilles slaughtered in his stream,  
 And had no pity on them. When the twain  
 Were near each other, standing face to face, 185

The swift Achilles was the first to speak:—

“Who and whence art thou that dost venture thus  
To meet me? They who seek to measure strength  
With me are sons of most unhappy men.”

And thus the illustrious son of Pelegon 190  
Made answer: “Brave Pelides, why inquire  
My lineage? I am from a distant coast,—  
Pæonia’s fertile fields; I lead to war  
Pæonia’s warriors with long spears, and this  
Is now the eleventh morning since I came 195  
To join the war at Troy. I claim descent  
From Axius, the broad Axius, who pours forth  
The fairest river on the earth. His son  
Was Pelegon, expert to wield the spear,  
And I was born to Pelegon. And now, 200  
Illustrious son of Peleus, let us fight.”

He spake: Achilles raised the Pelian ash  
To smite; Asteropæus aimed at him  
Both lances, for he used both hands alike.  
One struck the Grecian’s shield, yet passed not through, 205  
Stopped by the god-given gold; the other gashed  
Lightly the elbow of his dexter arm;  
The black blood spouted forth, the spear passed on  
Beyond him, and, still eager for its prey,

Stood fixed in earth. Achilles then, intent 210  
To slay Asteropæus, hurled at him  
His trusty spear. The weapon missed its mark,  
And, striking the high bank, was buried there  
Up to the middle of its ashen staff.  
Achilles drew the keen sword from his thigh, 215  
And flew with fury toward his foe, who toiled  
In vain with sinewy arm to pluck that spear  
From out the bank; and thrice he shook the beam  
Fiercely, and thrice desisted, lacking strength,  
And last he sought, by bending it, to break 220  
The ashen weapon of Æacides.  
But ere it snapped Achilles took his life,  
Smiting him at the navel with the sword.  
Forth gushed the entrails to the ground, and o'er  
His dying eyes the darkness came; and then 225  
Achilles, leaping on his breast, tore off  
The armor, and exultingly exclaimed: —  
“Lie there! a perilous task it was for thee  
To combat with a son of Jove, though born  
Thyself to a great River. I can boast 230  
Descent from sovereign Jove. I owe my birth  
To Peleus, ruler of the Myrmidons.  
His father was Æacus, who was born

To Jupiter, a god more potent far  
Than all the rivers flowing to the sea. 235  
And mightier is the race of Jupiter  
Than that of any stream. Here close at hand  
Is a great river, if such aid can aught  
Avail thee; but to strive with Jupiter  
Is not permitted. Acheloüs, king 240  
Of rivers, cannot vie with him, nor yet  
The great and mighty deep from which proceed  
All streams and seas and founts and watery depths.  
He trembles at the bolt of mighty Jove  
And his hoarse thunder crashing in the sky." 245

As thus he spake he plucked from out the bank  
His brazen spear, and left the lifeless chief  
Stretched in the sand, where the dark water steeped  
His limbs, and eels and fishes came and gnawed  
The warrior's reins. Achilles hastened on, 250  
Pursuing the Pæonian knights, who now,  
When they beheld their bravest overthrown  
In desperate battle by the mighty arm  
And falchion of Pelides, took to flight  
Along the eddying river. There he slew 255  
Mydon, Thersilochus, Astypylus,  
Mnesus, and Thrasius, and struck down in death



Ænius and Ophelestes. Many more  
Of the Pæonians the swift-footed Greek  
Had slain, had not the eddying River, roused 260  
To anger, put a human semblance on,  
And uttered from its whirling deeps a voice:—

“O son of Peleus! thou who dost excel  
All other men in might and dreadful deeds,—  
For the gods aid thee ever,—if the son 265  
Of Saturn gives thee to destroy the race  
Of Trojans, drive them from me to the plain,  
And there perform thy terrible exploits.

For now my pleasant waters, in their flow,  
Are choked with heaps of dead, and I no more 270  
Can pour them into the great deep, so thick  
The corpses clog my bed, while thou dost slay  
And sparest not. Now then, withhold thy hand,  
Prince of the people! I am horror-struck.”

Achilles the swift-footed made reply: 275  
“Be it as thou commandest, foster-child  
Of Jove, Scamander! Yet I shall not cease  
To slay these treaty-breakers till at length  
I shut them up within their town, and force  
Hector to meet me, that we may decide 280  
Which shall o’ercome the other,—he or I.”

He spake, and rushed upon the men of Troy,  
Terrible as a god, while from his bed  
The eddyng River called to Phœbus thus:—

“Why this, thou bearer of the silver bow, 285  
Thou son of Jove? Thou heedest not the will  
Of Saturn’s son, who strictly bade that thou  
Shouldst aid the Trojans till the latest gleam  
Of sunset, and till night is on the fields.”

And then Achilles, mighty with the spear, 290  
From the steep bank leaped into the mid-stream,  
While, foul with ooze, the angry River raised  
His waves, and pushed along the heaps of dead  
Slain by Achilles. These, with mighty roar  
As of a bellowing ox, Scamander cast 295  
Aground; the living with his whirling gulfs  
He hid, and saved them in his friendly streams.  
In tumult terribly the surges rose  
Around Achilles, beating on his shield,  
And made his feet to stagger, till he grasped 300  
A tall, fair-growing elm upon the bank.  
Down came the tree, and in its loosened roots  
Brought the earth with it; the fair stream was checked  
By the thick branches, and the prostrate trunk  
Bridged it from side to side. Achilles sprang 305

From the deep pool, and fled with rapid feet  
Across the plain in terror. Nor did then  
The mighty river-god refrain, but rose  
Against him with a darker crest, to drive  
The noble son of Peleus from the field, 310  
And so deliver Troy. Pelides sprang  
A spear's cast backward,—sprang with all the speed  
Of the black eagle's wing, the hunter-bird,  
Fleetest and strongest of the fowls of air.  
Like him he darted; clashing round his breast, 315  
The brazen mail rang fearfully. Askance  
He fled; the water with a mighty roar  
Followed him close. As, when a husbandman  
Leads forth, from some dark spring of earth, a rill  
Among his planted garden-beds, and clears 320  
Its channel, spade in hand, the pebbles there  
Move with the current, which runs murmuring down  
The sloping surface and outstrips its guide,—  
So rushed the waves where'er Achilles ran,  
Swift as he was; for mightier are the gods 325  
Than men. As often as the noble son  
Of Peleus made a stand in hope to know  
Whether the deathless gods of the great heaven  
Conspired to make him flee, so often came


A mighty billow of the Jove-born stream 320  
And drenched his shoulders. Then again he sprang  
Away; the rapid torrent made his knees  
To tremble, while it swept, where'er he trod,  
The earth from underneath his feet. He looked  
To the broad heaven above him, and complained:— 325  
“Will not some god, O Father Jove, put forth  
His power to save me in my hour of need  
From this fierce river? Any fate but this  
I am resigned to suffer. None of all  
The immortal ones is more in fault than she 330  
To whom I owe my birth; her treacherous words  
Deluded me to think that I should fall  
Beneath the walls of Troy by the swift shafts  
Of Phœbus. Would that Hector, the most brave  
Of warriors reared upon the Trojan soil, 335  
Had slain me; he had slain a brave man then,  
And a brave man had stripped me of my arms.  
But now it is my fate to perish, caught  
In this great river, like a swineherd's boy,  
Who in the time of rains attempts to pass 340  
A torrent, and is overwhelmed and drowned.”

He spake, and Neptune and Minerva came  
Quickly and stood beside him. In the form

Of men they came, and took his hand, and cheered  
His spirit with their words. And thus the god 355  
Neptune, who makes the earth to tremble, said:—

“Fear not, Pelides, neither let thy heart  
Be troubled, since thou hast among the gods,  
By Jove’s consent, auxiliars such as I  
And Pallas. It is not thy doom to be 360  
Thus vanquished by a river. Soon its rage  
Will cease, as thou shalt see. Meantime we give  
This counsel; heed it well: let not thy hand  
Refrain from slaughter till the Trojan host  
Are all shut up—all that escape thy arm— 365  
Within the lofty walls of Troy. Then take  
The life of Hector, and return on board  
Thy galleys; we will make that glory thine.”

Thus having spoken, they withdrew and joined  
The immortals, while Achilles hastened on, 370  
Encouraged by the mandate of the gods,  
Across the plain. The plain was overflowed  
With water; sumptuous arms were floating round,  
And bodies of slain youths. Achilles leaped,  
And stemmed with powerful limbs the stream, and still 375  
Went forward; for Minerva mightily  
Had strengthened him. Nor did Scamander fail



To put forth all his power, enraged the more  
Against the son of Peleus; higher still  
His torrent swelled and tossed with all its waves, 380  
And thus he called to Simois with a shout:—  
    “O brother, join with me to hold in check  
This man, who threatens soon to overthrow  
King Priam’s noble city; for no more  
The Trojan host resist him. Come at once 385  
And aid me; fill thy channel from its springs,  
And summon all thy brooks, and lift on high  
A mighty wave, and roll along thy bed,  
Mingled in one great torrent, trees and stones,  
That we may tame this savage man, who now 390  
In triumph walks the field, and bears himself  
As if he were a god. His strength, I deem,  
Will not avail him, nor his noble form,  
Nor those resplendent arms, which yet shall lie  
Scattered along the bottom of my gulfs, 395  
And foul with ooze. Himself too I shall wrap  
In sand, and pile the rubbish of my bed  
In heaps around him. Never shall the Greeks  
Know where to gather up his bones, o’erspread  
By me with river-slime, for there shall be 400  
His burial-place; no other tomb the Greeks

Will need when they perform his funeral rites."

He spake, and wrathfully he rose against  
Achilles,—rose with turbid waves, and noise,  
And foam, and blood and bodies of the dead. 405

One purple billow of the Jove-born stream  
Swelled high and whelmed Achilles. Juno saw,  
And trembled lest the hero should be whirled  
Downward by the great river, and in haste  
She called to Vulcan, her beloved son:— 410

"Vulcan, my son, arise! We deemed that thou  
And eddying Xanthus were of equal might  
In battle. Come with instant aid, and bring  
Thy vast array of flames, while from the deep  
I call a tempest of the winds,—the West 415  
And the swift South,—and they shall sweep along  
A fiery torrent to consume the foe,  
Warriors and weapons. Thou meantime lay waste  
The groves along the Xanthus; hurl at him  
Thy fires, nor let him with soft words or threats 420  
Avert thy fury. Pause not from the work  
Of ruin till I shout and give the sign,  
And then shalt thou restrain thy restless fires."

She spake, and Vulcan at her word sent forth  
His fierce, devouring flames. Upon the plain 425

They first were kindled, and consumed the dead  
That strewed it, where Achilles struck them down.  
The ground was dried; the glimmering flood was stayed.  
As when the autumnal north-wind, breathing o'er  
A newly watered garden, quickly dries 430  
The clammy mould, and makes the tiller glad,  
So did the spacious plain grow dry on which  
The dead were turned to ashes. Then, the god  
Seized on the river with his glittering fires.  
The elms, the willows, and the tamarisks 435  
Fell, scorched to cinders, and the lotus-herbs,  
Rushes, and reeds that richly fringed the banks  
Of that fair-flowing current were consumed.  
The eels and fishes, that were wont to glide  
Hither and thither through the pleasant depths 440  
And eddies, languished in the fiery breath  
Of Vulcan, mighty artisan. The strength  
Of the great River withered, and he spake:—  
“O Vulcan, there is none of all the gods  
Who may contend with thee. I combat not 445  
With fires like thine. Cease then. With my consent  
The noble son of Peleus may drive out  
The Trojans from their city. What have I  
To do with war, — the attack or the defence?”



Thus in that fiery glow he spake, while seethed  
His pleasant streams. As over a strong fire  
A caldron filled with fat of pampered swine  
Glow's bubbling on all sides, while underneath  
Burns the dry fuel, thus were his fair streams  
Scorched by the heat, and simmered, while the blast 455  
Sent forth by Vulcan, the great artisan,  
Tormented him, and he besought the aid  
Of Juno with these supplicating words:—

“Why should thy son, O Juno, wreak on me  
His fury, more than on the other gods? 460  
My fault is less than theirs who give their aid  
To Troy; and I will cease, if thou command.  
Bid him desist, and here I pledge my oath  
Not to attempt to save the Trojan race  
From ruin, though their city sink in flames 465  
Before the torches of the warlike Greeks.”

This when the white-armed goddess Juno heard,  
She said to Vulcan, her beloved son:—

“Dear son, refrain; it is not well that thus  
A god should suffer for the sake of men.” 470

She spake, and Vulcan quenched his dreadful fires,  
And back the pleasant waters to their bed  
Went gliding. Xanthus had been made to yield,

And the two combatants no longer strove  
Since Juno, though offended, bade them cease. 475

Yet was the conflict terrible among  
The other gods, as zeal for different sides  
Impelled them. With a loud uproar they met  
Each other in the field; the spacious earth  
Rebellowed to the noise, and the great heaven 480  
Returned it. To the ear of Jove it rose,  
Who, sitting on Olympus, laughed within  
His secret heart as he beheld the gods  
Contending, for not long they stood apart.  
Shield-breaking Mars began the assault; he rushed 485  
Toward Pallas, brandishing his brazen spear,  
And thus accosted her with insolent words:—

“Thou shameless one, thou whose effrontery  
Is boundless, why wilt thou provoke the gods  
To strife? Thy temper is most arrogant. 490  
Rememberest thou the time when thou didst prompt  
Tydides Diomed to strike at me?  
It was thy hand that held his shining spear,  
And aimed it well, and gave the wound; but now  
Will I take vengeance on thee for that wrong.” 495

He spake, and smote Minerva's fringed shield,  
The dreadful ægis, which not even Jove

Could pierce with thunderbolts. The murderous Mars  
Smote it with his huge spear. She only stepped  
Backward a space, and with her powerful hand 500  
Lifted a stone that lay upon the plain,  
Black, huge, and jagged, which the men of old  
Had placed there for a landmark. This she hurled  
At Mars, and struck him on the neck; he fell  
With nerveless limbs, and covered, as he lay, 505  
Seven acres of the field: his armor clashed  
Around him in his fall; his locks all soiled  
Lay in the trodden dust. The goddess stood  
O'er him, and boasted thus with wingèd words:—

“Fool that thou art, hast thou not learned how much  
The might I boast excels thine own, that thus 511  
Thou measurest strength with me? Now dost thou feel  
Thy mother's curse fulfilled, who meditates  
Thy chastisement, since thou hast left the Greeks  
And joined the treaty-breaking sons of Troy.” 515

She spake, and turned away her glorious eyes.  
Jove's daughter, Venus, took the hand of Mars,  
And led him groaning thence, while hardly yet  
His strength came back. The white-armed Juno saw,  
And spake to Pallas thus, with wingèd words:— 520

“See, daughter of the Ægis-bearer, Jove,

Unconquerable maid! that shameless one,  
Through all the tumult, from the thick of fight,  
Leads hence the murderous Mars; but follow her."

She spake, and Pallas gladly hastened forth, 535  
And, overtaking Venus, dealt at her  
A mighty buffet on the breast; her heart  
Fainted, her knees gave way; and, as she lay  
Prostrate with Mars upon the fruitful earth,  
Exulting Pallas spake these wingèd words: — 540

"Would that all those who aid the cause of Troy  
And combat with the mailèd Greeks were thus!  
Would that they were as hardy and as brave  
As Venus here, who ventured to the help  
Of Mars, and met the force of my right arm! 545  
Then had the stately Ilium been o'erthrown  
Long since, and we had rested from the war."

She spake: the white-armed Juno gently smiled,  
And then King Neptune to Apollo said: —

"Why, Phœbus, stand we thus aloof? it ill 550  
Becomes us, while the other gods engage  
In conflict. 'T were a shame should we return  
Up to Olympus and the brazen halls  
Of Jove with no blow struck. Begin, for thou  
Art younger born, and I, who both in years 555

And knowledge am before thee, must not make  
The assault. O silly god, and slow of thought!  
Hast thou indeed forgotten all the wrongs  
We suffered once in Troy, and only we  
Of all the gods, when, sent to earth by Jove, 550  
We served a twelvemonth for a certain hire  
The proud Laomedon, by whom our tasks  
Were set? I built a city and a wall  
Of broad extent, and beautiful, and strong  
To stand assault; and, Phœbus, thou didst feed 555  
His stamping oxen, with curved horns, among  
The lawns of woody Ida seamed with glens.  
But when the welcome hours had brought the day  
Of our reward, the ruffian king refused  
The promised wages, and dismissed us both 560  
With menaces; to bind thee hand and foot  
He threatened, and to sell thee as a slave  
In distant isles, and to cut off the ears  
Of both of us. So we returned to heaven,  
Incensed at him who thus withheld the hire 565  
He promised. Dost thou favor Troy for this?  
Wilt thou not rather act with us until  
These treaty-breakers, with their children all  
And their chaste matrons, perish utterly?"

Then thus the archer-king, Apollo, spake: 570  
"Thou wouldst not deem me wise, should I contend  
With thee, O Neptune, for the sake of men,  
Who flourish like the forest-leaves awhile,  
And feed upon the fruits of earth, and then  
Decay and perish. Let us quit the field, 575  
And leave the combat to the warring hosts."

He spake, and turned, afraid to meet in arms  
His uncle; but the sylvan Dian heard, —  
His sister, mistress of the beasts that range  
The wilds, — and harshly thus upbraided him: — 580

"O mighty Archer, dost thou flee and yield  
The victory to Neptune, who bears off  
A glory cheaply earned? Why dost thou bear  
That idle bow, thou coxcomb? I shall hope  
No more to hear thee in our father's halls, 585  
And in the presence of the immortals, boast  
That thou wilt fight with Neptune hand to hand."

The archer-god, Apollo, answered not;  
But thus the imperial wife of Jupiter,  
Indignantly and with reproachful words, 590  
Rebuked the quivered goddess of the chase: —

"How is it that thou dardest, shameless one,  
Resist me? Thou wilt find it hard, though trained

In archery, to match thy strength with mine,  
Though Jove has made thee among womankind 595  
A lioness, and though he gives thee power  
To slay whomever of thy sex thou wilt;  
Yet wilt thou find it easier to strike down  
The mountain beasts of prey, and forest deer,  
Than combat with thy betters. If thou choose 600  
To try the event of battle, then put forth  
Thy strength against me, and thou shalt be taught  
How greatly I excel in might of arm."

Thus Juno spake, and grasped in her left hand  
Both Dian's wrists, and, plucking with her right 605  
The quiver from her shoulders, beat with it  
Her ears, and smiled as under her quick blows  
The sufferer writhed. To earth the arrows fell,  
And Dian weeping fled. As when a dove,  
Not fated to be overtaken yet, 610  
Flees from a hawk to find her hiding-place,  
The hollow rock, so Dian fled in tears,  
And left her arrows. To Latona, then,  
Heaven's messenger, the Argus-queller, spake:—

"Far be it from me to contend with thee, 615  
Latona; perilous it were to meet  
A consort of the Cloud-compeller, Jove,

In combat. Go and freely make thy best  
Among the gods that thou hast vanquished me."

He spake: Latona gathered from the ground 680  
The bow and shafts which in that whirl of dust  
Had fallen here and there, and, bearing them,  
Followed her daughter, who meantime had reached  
Olympus and the brazen halls of Jove.

And there, a daughter at her father's knees, 685  
She sat her down, while, as she wept, her robe  
Of heavenly texture trembled. Graciously  
Jove smiled, and drew her toward him and inquired:  
"What dweller of the sky has dared do this,  
Dear child, as though some flagrant guilt were thine? 690

And thus replied the mistress of the chase  
Crowned with the crescent: "Father, 't was thy queen,  
The white-armed Juno; she who causes strife  
And wrath among the gods has done me wrong."

So talked they, while to sacred Ilium came 695  
Phœbus Apollo; 't was his charge to watch  
The well-built city's ramparts, lest the Greeks  
That day should lay it waste against the will  
Of fate. The other gods went back to heaven,  
Some angry, some exulting. They sat down 700  
Beside the All-Father, him who darkens heaven



With gathered clouds. Meantime Achilles chased  
And slew the Trojans and their firm-paced steeds.  
As, when the smoke rolls heavenward from a town  
Given by the angry gods a prey to fire, 645  
Toil is the lot of all, and bitter woe  
The fate of many, such the woe and toil  
Caused by Achilles to the sons of Troy.

The aged Priam from a lofty tower  
Beheld the large-limbed son of Peleus range 650  
The field, and all the Trojans helplessly  
Fleeing in tumult. With a cry of grief  
He came from that high station to the ground,  
And gave commandment to the sturdy men  
Who stood to watch the gates along the wall: — 655

“Hold the gates open while the flying host  
Enter the city; for Achilles comes,  
Routing them, near at hand, and we may see  
Terrible havoc. But when all our troops  
Are once within the walls, and breathe again, 660  
Shut the close-fitting portals; for I dread  
Lest that fierce warrior rush into our streets.”

He spake: they drew the bolts and opened wide  
The gates, and gave a refuge to the host.  
Then leaped Apollo forth to meet their flight 665

And rescue them. All faint with burning thirst,  
And grimed with dust, they hurried o'er the plain,  
And toward the city and its lofty walls,  
While eagerly Achilles on their track  
Pressed with his spear; his heart was full of rage, 670  
And all on fire his spirit with desire  
For glory. Then the Greeks had overthrown  
The towery Troy, if Phœbus had not moved  
Agenor, a young hero, nobly born,  
Blameless, and brave, Antenor's son, to meet 675  
Achilles. Phœbus breathed into his heart  
Courage, as, standing by the youth, he leaned  
Against a beechen tree, and, wrapped from sight  
In darkness, watched to rescue him from death.  
Agenor stood as he beheld approach 680  
The mighty spoiler, and, perplexed in mind,  
Sighed heavily, and said to his great soul: —  
    "Ah me! if with the routed troops I flee  
From fierce Achilles, he will overtake  
And slay me; I shall die as cowards die. 685  
But if I leave the host to be pursued  
By Peleus' son, and by another way  
Flee from the wall across the plain, until  
I reach the lawns of Ida, and am hid

Among its thickets, then I may at eve 690  
Bathe in the river and return refreshed  
To Troy. But why give way to thoughts like these?  
For he may yet observe me as I haste  
From Ilium o'er the plain, and his swift feet  
May follow; there will then be no escape 695  
From death and fate, since he in might of arm  
Excels all other men. If now I here  
Confront him before Troy, I cannot think  
That he is weapon-proof; one life alone  
Dwells in him, though Saturnian Jupiter 700  
Bestows on him the glory of the day."

He spake, and firmly waited for the son .  
Of Peleus; eagerly his fearless heart  
Longed for the combat. As a panther leaves  
The covert of the wood and comes to meet 705  
A huntsman, nor is scared nor put to flight  
By noise of baying hounds, not even though  
A spear's thrust or a javelin flung from far  
Have wounded him, yet, wounded, he fights on,  
Until he grapples with his enemy 710  
Or perishes,—thus did the noble son  
Of the renowned Antenor press to try  
His prowess with Achilles, and disdained

To flee before him. Holding his round shield  
Before his face, and with his lifted spear 715  
Aimed at the Greek, he shouted thus aloud: —

“Renowned Achilles! thou dost fondly hope  
That thou to-day wilt overthrow the town  
Of the magnanimous Trojans. Many toils,  
Thou fool! must be endured ere that can be; 720  
For we are many and are brave who dwell  
Within it, and shall well defend the town  
For our beloved parents and our wives  
And little ones. Here shalt thou meet thy doom,  
Brave as thou art, and terrible in war.” 725

As thus he spake, his powerful hand dismissed  
The keen-edged spear, nor missed his aim; it struck  
The son of Peleus just below the knee.  
The tin of which the greave was newly forged  
Rang shrilly, and sent back the brazen point; 730  
It could not pierce the armor which a god  
Had given. And then the son of Peleus aimed  
His weapon at Agenor. Phœbus came  
And snatched away his triumph, bearing off  
The godlike youth, Agenor, in a veil 735  
Of darkness from the perils of the war.  
Then he decoyed Achilles from the host

Of Troy; the archer of the skies put on  
Agenor's perfect semblance, and appeared  
Before the Greek, and fled; his hasty flight 740  
Was followed close. Achilles chased the god  
Ever before him, yet still near, across  
The fruitful fields, to the deep-eddied stream  
Of Xanthus; for Apollo artfully  
Made it to seem that he should soon o'ertake 745  
His flying foe, and thus beguiled him on.  
Meantime the routed Trojans gladly thronged  
Into the city, filled the streets, and closed  
The portals. None now dared without the walls  
To wait for others, or remain to know 750  
Who had escaped with life, and who were slain  
In battle; eagerly they flung themselves  
Into the city,—every one whose feet  
And knees had borne him from the field alive.

*BOOK XXII.*

**T**HUS were they driven within the city walls  
Like frightened fawns, and there dispersing cooled  
Their sweaty limbs, and quenched their eager thirst,  
And rested on the battlements. The Greeks,  
Bearing their shields upon their shoulders, came 5  
Close to the ramparts. Hector's adverse fate  
Detained him still without the walls of Troy,  
And near the Scæan gates. Meantime the god  
Apollo to the son of Peleus said:—

“O son of Peleus! why pursue me thus 10  
With thy swift feet,—a mortal man in chase  
Of an immortal? That I am a god  
Thou seest not yet, but turnest all thy rage  
On me, and, having put the host of Troy  
To rout, dost think of them no more. They find 15  
A refuge in their town, while far astray  
Thou wanderest hither. Thou hast not the power  
To slay me; I am not of mortal birth.”

The aged monarch Priam was the first  
To see him as he scoured the plain, and shone  
Like to the star which in the autumn time  
Rises and glows among the lights of heaven  
With eminent lustre at the dead of night,—  
Orion's Hound they call it,—bright indeed,  
And yet of baleful omen, for it brings  
Distressing heat to miserable men.  
So shone the brass upon the warrior's breast  
As on he flew. The aged Priam groaned,

And smote his head with his hands, and called  
 Aloud, imploring his beloved son,  
 Who eagerly before the city gate  
 46        Wailed his foe Achilles. Priam thus,  
 With outstretched hands, besought him piteously:—  
 “O wait not, Hector, my beloved son,  
 To combat with Pelides, thus alone  
 And far from succor, lest thou meet thy death  
 50        Slain by his hand, for he is mightier far  
 Than thou art. Would that he, the cruel one,  
 Were but as much the favorite of the gods  
 As he is mine! then should the birds of prey  
 And dogs devour his carcass, and the grief  
 55        That weighs upon my spirit would depart.  
 I have been robbed by him of many sons,—  
 Brave youths, whom he has slain or sold as slaves  
 In distant isles; and now I see no more  
 Among our host on whom the gates are closed  
 60        My Polydorus and Lycaon, whom  
 The peerless dame Laethœ bore to me.  
 If yet they are within the Grecian camp,  
 I will redeem their lives with brass and gold;  
 For I have store, which Altes, the renowned  
 65        And aged, gave his daughter. If they live



No longer, but have passed to the abode  
Of Hades, bitter will our sorrow be,—  
Mine and their mother's,—but the popular grief  
Will sooner be consoled if thou fall not, 70  
Slain by Achilles. Come within the walls,  
My son, that thou mayst still be the defence  
Of Ilium's sons and daughters, nor increase  
The glory of Pelides with the loss  
Of thine own life. Have pity upon me, 75  
Who only live to suffer,—whom the son  
Of Saturn, on the threshold of my age,  
Hath destined to endure a thousand griefs,  
And then to be destroyed,—to see my sons  
Slain by the sword, my daughters dragged away 80  
Into captivity, their chambers made  
A spoil, our infants dashed against the ground  
By cruel hands, the consorts of my sons  
Borne off by the ferocious Greeks; and last,  
Perchance the very dogs which I have fed 85  
Here in my palaces and at my board,  
The guardians of my doors, when, by the spear  
Or sword, some enemy shall take my life,  
And at my threshold leave me stretched a corpse,  
Will rend me, and, with savage greediness, 90

Will lap my blood, and in the porch lie down.  
When one in prime of youth lies slain in war,  
Gashed with the spear, his wounds become him well,  
And honor him in all men's eyes; but when  
An aged man is slain, and his white head 95  
And his white beard and limbs are foully torn  
By ravening dogs, there is no sadder sight."

So the old monarch spake, and with his hands  
Tore his gray hair, but moved not Hector thus.  
Then came, with lamentations and in tears, 100  
The warrior's mother forward. One hand laid  
Her bosom bare; she pressed the other hand  
Beneath it, sobbed, and spake these wingèd words:—

"Revere this bosom, Hector, and on me  
Have pity. If when thou wert but a babe 105  
I ever on this bosom stilled thy cries,  
Think of it now, beloved child; avoid  
That dreadful chief; withdraw within the walls,  
Nor madly think to encounter him alone,  
Son of my love and of my womb! If he 110  
Should slay thee, I shall not lament thy death  
Above thy bier,—I, nor thy noble wife,—  
But far from us the greedy dogs will throng  
To mangle thee beside the Grecian fleet."

Thus, weeping bitterly, the aged pair 115  
Entreated their dear son, yet moved him not.  
He stood and waited for his mighty foe  
Achilles, as a serpent at his den,  
Fed on the poisons of the wild, awaits  
The traveller, and, fierce with hate of man, 120  
And glaring fearfully, lies coiled within.  
So waited Hector with a resolute heart,  
And kept his ground, and, leaning his bright shield  
Against a tower that jutted from the walls,  
Conferred with his great soul impatiently:— 125  
    “Ah me! if I should pass within the walls,  
Then will Polydamas be first to cast  
Reproach upon me; for he counselled me  
To lead the Trojans back into the town  
That fatal night which saw Achilles rise 130  
To join the war again. I yielded not  
To his advice; far better if I had.  
Now, since my fatal stubbornness has brought  
This ruin on my people, I most dread  
The censure of the men and long-robed dames 135  
Of Ilium. Men less brave than I will say,  
‘Foolhardy Hector in his pride has thrown  
His people’s lives away.’ So will they speak,

And better were it for me to return,  
Achilles slain, or, slain myself by him, 140  
To perish for my country gloriously.  
But should I lay aside this bossy shield  
And this stout helm, and lean against the wall  
This spear, and go to meet the gallant son  
Of Peleus, with a promise to restore 145  
Helen and all the treasure brought with her  
To Troy by Paris, in his roomy ships,—  
All that the war was waged for,—that the sons  
Of Atreus may convey it hence, besides  
Wealth drawn from all the hoards within the town, 150  
And to be shared among the Greeks; for I  
Would bind the Trojans by a solemn oath  
To keep back nothing, but divide the whole—  
Whate'er of riches this fair town contains—  
Into two parts— But why should I waste thought 155  
On plans like these? I must not act the part  
Of suppliant to a man who may not show  
Regard or mercy, but may hew me down  
Defenceless, with my armor laid aside  
As if I were a woman. Not with him 160  
May I hold parley from a tree or rock,  
As youths and maidens with each other hold

Light converse. Better 't were to rush at once  
To combat, and the sooner learn to whom  
Olympian Jove decrees the victory."

165

Such were his thoughts. Achilles now drew near.

Like crested Mars, the warrior-god, he came.

On his right shoulder quivered fearfully

The Pelian ash, and from his burnished mail

There streamed a light as of a blazing fire,

170

Or of the rising sun. When Hector saw,

He trembled, nor could venture to remain,

But left the gates and fled away in fear.

Pelides, trusting to his rapid feet,

Pursued him. As, among the mountain wilds,

175

A falcon, fleetest of the birds of air,

Darts toward a timid dove that wheels away

To shun him by a sidelong flight, while he

Springs after her again and yet again,

And screaming follows, certain of his prey, —

180

Thus onward flew Achilles, while as fast

Fled Hector in dismay, with hurrying feet,

Beside the wall. They passed the Mount of View,

And the wind-beaten fig-tree, and they ran

Along the public way by which the wall

185

Was skirted, till they came where from the ground

The two fair springs of eddyng Xanthus rise, —  
One pouring a warm stream from which ascends  
And spreads a vapor like a smoke from fire;  
The other, even in summer, sending forth 190  
A current cold as hail, or snow, or ice.  
And there were broad stone basins, fairly wrought,  
At which, in time of peace, before the Greeks  
Had landed on the plain, the Trojan dames  
And their fair daughters washed their sumptuous robes. 195  
Past these they swept; one fled, and one pursued, —  
A brave man fled, a braver followed close,  
And swiftly both. Not for a common prize,  
A victim from the herd, a bullock's hide,  
Such as reward the fleet of foot, they ran, — 200  
The race was for the knightly Hector's life.  
As firm-paced coursers, that are wont to win,  
Fly toward the goal, when some magnificent prize,  
A tripod or a damsel, is proposed  
In honor of some hero's obsequies, 205  
So these flew thrice on rapid feet around  
The city of Priam. All the gods of heaven  
Looked on, and thus the Almighty Father spake:—  
“Alas! I see a hero dear to me  
Pursued around the wall. My heart is grieved 210

For Hector, who has brought so many thighs  
Of bullocks to my altar on the side  
Of Ida ploughed with glens, or on the heights  
Of Ilium. The renowned Achilles now  
Is chasing him with rapid feet around 215  
The city of Priam. Now bethink yourselves,  
And answer. Shall we rescue him from death?  
Or shall we doom him, valiant as he is,  
To perish by the hand of Peleus' son?"

Minerva, blue-eyed goddess, answered thus: 220  
"O Father, who dost hurl the thunderbolt,  
And hide the sky in clouds, what hast thou said?  
Wouldst thou reprieve from death a mortal man,  
Whose doom is fixed? Then do it; but know this,  
That all the other gods will not approve." 225

Then spake again the Cloud-compeller Jove:  
"Tritonia, my dear child, be calm. I spake  
Of no design. I would be kind to thee.  
Do as thou wilt, and be there no delay."

He spake; and Pallas from the Olympian peaks, 230  
Encouraged by his words in what her thought  
Had planned already, downward shot to earth.  
Still, with quick steps, the fleet Achilles pressed  
On Hector's flight. As when a hound has roused

A fawn from its retreat among the hills, 235  
And chases it through glen and forest ground,  
And to close thickets, where it skulks in fear  
Until he overtake it, Hector thus  
Sought vainly to elude the fleet pursuit  
Of Peleus' son. As often as he thought, 240  
By springing toward the gates of Troy, to gain  
Aid from the weapons of his friends who stood  
On the tall towers, so often was the Greek  
Before him, forcing him to turn away  
From Ilium toward the plain. Achilles thus 245  
Kept nearest to the city. As in dreams  
The fleet pursuer cannot overtake,  
Nor the pursued escape, so was it now;  
One followed but in vain, the other fled  
As fruitlessly. But how could Hector thus 250  
Have put aside the imminent doom of death,  
Had not Apollo met him once again,  
For the last time, and given him strength and speed?  
The great Achilles nodded to his host  
A sign that no man should presume to strike 255  
At Hector with his weapon, lest perchance  
Another, wounding him, should bear away  
The glory, and Pelides only wear



The second honors. When the twain had come  
For the fourth time beside Scamander's springs, 260  
The All-Father raised the golden balance high,  
And, placing in the scales two lots which bring  
Death's long dark sleep, — one lot for Peleus' son,  
And one for knightly Hector, — by the midst  
He poised the balance. Hector's fate sank down 265  
To Hades, and Apollo left the field.

The blue-eyed goddess Pallas then approached  
The son of Peleus with these wingèd words:—

“Renowned Achilles, dear to Jupiter!  
Now may we, as I hope, at last return 270  
To the Achaian army and the fleet  
With glory, Hector slain, the terrible  
In war. Escape he cannot, even though  
The archer-god Apollo fling himself  
With passionate entreaty at the feet 275  
Of Jove the Ægis-bearer. Stay thou here  
And breathe a moment, while I go to him  
And lure him hither to encounter thee.”

She spake, and he obeyed, and gladly stood  
Propped on the ashen stem of his keen spear ; 280  
While, passing on, Minerva overtook  
The noble Hector. In the outward form,

And with the strong voice of Deiphobus,  
She stood by him and spake these wingèd words:—

“Hard pressed I find thee, brother, by the swift      285  
Achilles, who, with feet that never rest,  
Pursues thee round the walls of Priam’s town.  
But let us make a stand and beat him back.”

And then the crested Hector spake in turn :  
“Deiphobus, thou ever hast been dear      290  
To me beyond my other brethren, sons  
Of Hecuba and Priam. Now still more  
I honor thee, since thou hast seen my plight,  
And for my sake hast ventured forth without  
The gates, while all the rest remain within.”      295

And then the blue-eyed Pallas spake again :  
“Brother! ’t is true, my father, and the queen,  
My mother, and my comrades, clasped my knees  
In turn, and earnestly entreated me  
That I would not go forth, such fear had fallen      300  
On all of them; but I was grieved for thee.  
Now let us combat valiantly, nor spare  
The weapons that we bear, and we shall learn  
Whether Achilles, having slain us both,  
Will carry to the fleet our bloody spoil,      305  
Or die himself, the victim of thy spear.”

The treacherous goddess spake, and led the way ;  
And when the advancing chiefs stood face to face,  
The crested hero, Hector, thus began :—

“No longer I avoid thee as of late, 310  
O son of Peleus! Thrice around the walls  
Of Priam’s mighty city have I fled,  
Nor dared to wait thy coming. Now my heart  
Bids me encounter thee; my time is come  
To slay or to be slain. Now let us call 315  
The gods to witness, who attest and guard  
The covenants of men. Should Jove bestow  
On me the victory, and I take thy life,  
Thou shalt meet no dishonor at my hands;  
But, stripping off the armor, I will send 320  
The Greeks thy body. Do the like by me.”

The swift Achilles answered with a frown :  
“Accursed Hector, never talk to me  
Of covenants. Men and lions plight no faith,  
Nor wolves agree with lambs, but each must plan 325  
Evil against the other. So between  
Thyself and me no compact can exist,  
Or understood intent. First, one of us  
Must fall and yield his life-blood to the god  
Of battles. Summon all thy valor now. 330

A skilful spearman thou hast need to be,  
And a bold warrior. There is no escape,  
For now doth Pallas doom thee to be slain  
By my good spear. Thou shalt repay to me  
The evil thou hast done my countrymen,— 335  
My friends whom thou hast slaughtered in thy rage.”

He spake, and, brandishing his massive spear,  
Hurled it at Hector, who beheld its aim  
From where he stood. He stooped, and over him  
The brazen weapon passed, and plunged to earth. 340  
Unseen by royal Hector, Pallas went  
And plucked it from the ground, and brought it back  
And gave it to the hands of Peleus' son,  
While Hector said to his illustrious foe:—

“Godlike Achilles, thou hast missed thy mark; 345  
Nor hast thou learned my doom from Jupiter,  
As thou pretendest. Thou art glib of tongue,  
And cunningly thou orderest thy speech,  
In hope that I who hear thee may forget  
My might and valor. Think not I shall flee, 350  
That thou mayst pierce my back; for thou shalt send  
Thy spear, if God permit thee, through my breast  
As I rush on thee. Now avoid in turn  
My brazen weapon. Would that it might pass

Clean through thee, all its length! The tasks of war 355  
For us of Troy were lighter for thy death,  
Thou pest and deadly foe of all our race!"

He spake, and, brandishing his massive spear,  
Hurled it, nor missed, but in the centre smote  
The buckler of Pelides. Far away 360  
It bounded from the brass, and he was vexed  
To see that the swift weapon from his hand  
Had flown in vain. He stood perplexed and sad;  
No second spear had he. He called aloud  
On the white-bucklered chief, Deiphobus, 365  
To bring another; but that chief was far,  
And Hector saw that it was so, and said:—

"Ah me! the gods have summoned me to die.  
I thought my warrior-friend, Deiphobus,  
Was by my side; but he is still in Troy, 370  
And Pallas has deceived me. Now my death  
Cannot be far,—is near; there is no hope  
Of my escape, for so it pleases Jove  
And Jove's great archer-son, who have till now  
Delivered me. My hour at last is come; 375  
Yet not ingloriously or passively  
I die, but first will do some valiant deed,  
Of which mankind shall hear in after time."

He spake, and drew the keen-edged sword that hung,  
Massive and finely tempered, at his side, 380  
And sprang — as when an eagle high in heaven,  
Through the thick cloud, darts downward to the plain  
To clutch some tender lamb or timid hare,  
So Hector, brandishing that keen-edged sword,  
Sprang forward, while Achilles opposite 385  
Leaped toward him, all on fire with savage hate,  
And holding his bright buckler, nobly wrought,  
Before him. On his shining helmet waved  
The fourfold crest; there tossed the golden tufts  
With which the hand of Vulcan lavishly 390  
Had decked it. As in the still hours of night  
Hesper goes forth among the host of stars,  
The fairest light of heaven, so brightly shone,  
Brandished in the right hand of Peleus' son,  
The spear's keen blade, as, confident to slay 395  
The noble Hector, o'er his glorious form  
His quick eye ran, exploring where to plant  
The surest wound. The glittering mail of brass  
Won from the slain Patroclus guarded well  
Each part, save only where the collar-bones 400  
Divide the shoulder from the neck, and there  
Appeared the throat, the spot where life is most

In peril. Through that part the noble son  
Of Peleus drave his spear ; it went quite through  
The tender neck, and yet the brazen blade 405  
Cleft not the windpipe, and the power to speak  
Remained. The Trojan fell amid the dust,  
And thus Achilles boasted o'er his fall : —

“Hector, when from the slain Patroclus thou  
Didst strip his armor, little didst thou think 410  
Of danger. Thou hadst then no fear of me,  
Who was not near thee to avenge his death.  
Fool! there was left within the roomy ships  
A mightier one than he, who should come forth,  
The avenger of his blood, to take thy life. 415  
Foul dogs and birds of prey shall tear thy flesh ;  
The Greeks shall honor him with funeral rites.”

And then the crested Hector faintly said :  
“I pray thee by thy life, and by thy knees,  
And by thy parents, suffer not the dogs 420  
To tear me at the galleys of the Greeks.  
Accept abundant store of brass and gold,  
Which gladly will my father and the queen,  
My mother, give in ransom. Send to them  
My body, that the warriors and the dames 425  
Of Troy may light for me the funeral pile.”

The swift Achilles answered with a frown :

“Nay, by my knees entreat me not, thou cur,

Nor by my parents. I could even wish

My fury prompted me to cut thy flesh

430

In fragments, and devour it, such the wrong

That I have had from thee. There will be none

To drive away the dogs about thy head,

Not though thy Trojan friends should bring to me

Tenfold and twenty-fold the offered gifts,

435

And promise others, — not though Priam, sprung

From Dardanus, should send thy weight in gold.

Thy mother shall not lay thee on thy bier,

To sorrow over thee whom she brought forth ;

But dogs and birds of prey shall mangle thee.”

440

And then the crested Hector, dying, said :

“I know thee, and too clearly I foresaw

I should not move thee, for thou hast a heart

Of iron. Yet reflect that for my sake

The anger of the gods may fall on thee,

445

When Paris and Apollo strike thee down,

Strong as thou art, before the Scæan gates.”

Thus Hector spake, and straightway o’er him closed

The night of death ; the soul forsook his limbs,

And flew to Hades, grieving for its fate, —

450



So soon divorced from youth and youthful might.

Then said the great Achilles to the dead:—

“Die thou; and I, whenever it shall please  
Jove and the other gods will meet my fate.”

He spake, and, plucking forth his brazen lance, 455

He laid it by, and from the body stripped

The bloody mail. The thronging Greeks beheld

With wonder Hector's tall and stately form,

And no one came who did not add a wound;

And, looking to each other, thus they said:— 460

“How much more tamely Hector now endures

Our touch than when he set the fleet on fire!”

Such were the words of those who smote the dead;

But now, when swift Achilles from the corpse

Had stripped the armor, he stood forth among 465

The Achaian host, and spake these wingèd words:—

“Leaders and princes of the Grecian host!

Since we, my friends, by favor of the gods,

Have overcome the chief who wrought more harm

To us than all the rest, let us assault 470

The town, and learn what they of Troy intend,—

Whether their troops will leave the citadel

Since he is slain, or hold it with strong hand,

Though Hector is no more. But why give thought

To plans like these while yet Patroclus lies 475  
A corse unwept, unburied, at the fleet?  
I never will forget him while I live  
And while these limbs have motion. Though below  
In Hades they forget the dead, yet I  
Will there remember my beloved friend. 480  
Now then, ye youths of Greece, move on and chant  
A pæan, while, returning to the fleet,  
We bring great glory with us; we have slain  
The noble Hector, whom, throughout their town,  
The Trojans ever worshipped like a god." 485  
He spake, and, planning in his mind to treat  
The noble Hector shamefully, he bored  
The sinews of his feet between the heel  
And ankle; drawing through them leathern thongs  
He bound them to the car, but left the head 490  
To trail in dust. And then he climbed the car,  
Took in the shining mail, and lashed to speed  
The coursers. Not unwillingly they flew.  
Around the dead, as he was dragged along,  
The dust arose; his dark locks swept the ground. 495  
That head, of late so noble in men's eyes,  
Lay deep amid the dust, for Jove that day  
Suffered the foes of Hector to insult

His corse in his own land. His mother saw,  
And tore her hair, and flung her lustrous veil 500  
Away, and uttered piercing shrieks. No less  
His father, who so loved him, piteously  
Bewailed him; and in all the streets of Troy  
The people wept aloud, with such lament  
As if the towery Ilium were in flames 505  
Even to its loftiest roofs. They scarce could keep  
The aged king within, who, wild with grief,  
Struggled to rush through the Dardanian gates,  
And, rolling in the dust, entreated all  
Who stood around him, calling them by name:— 510  
“Refrain, my friends, though kind be your intent.  
Let me go forth alone, and at the fleet  
Of Greece will I entreat this man of blood  
And violence. He may perchance be moved  
With reverence for my age, and pity me 515  
In my gray hairs; for such a one as I  
Is Peleus, his own father, by whose care  
This Greek was reared to be a scourge to Troy,  
And, more than all, a cause of grief to me,  
So many sons of mine in life’s fresh prime 520  
Have fallen by his hand. I mourn for them,  
But not with such keen anguish as I mourn

For Hector. Sorrow for his death will bring  
My soul to Hades. Would that he had died  
Here in my arms! this solace had been ours, — 535  
His most unhappy mother and myself  
Had stooped to shed these tears upon his bier.”

He spake, and wept, and all the citizens  
Wept with him. Hecuba among the dames  
Took up the lamentation, and began: — 540

“Why do I live, my son, when thou art dead,  
And I so wretched? — thou who wert my boast  
Ever, by night and day, where’er I went,  
And whom the Trojan men and matrons called  
Their bulwark, honoring thee as if thou wert 545  
A god. They glory in thy might no more,  
Since Fate and Death have overtaken thee.”

Weeping she spake. Meantime Andromache  
Had heard no tidings of her husband yet.  
No messenger had even come to say 550  
That he was still without the gates. She sat  
In a recess of those magnificent halls,  
And wove a twofold web of brilliant hues,  
On which were scattered flowers of rare device;  
And she had given her bright-haired maidens charge 555  
To place an ample caldron on the fire,

That Hector, coming from the battle-field,  
Might find the warm bath ready. Thoughtless one!  
She knew not that the blue-eyed archer-queen,  
Far from the bath prepared for him, had slain 550  
Her husband by the hand of Peleus' son.  
She heard the shrieks, the wail upon the tower,  
Trembled in every limb, and quickly dropped  
The shuttle, saying to her bright-haired maids:—  
“Come with me, two of you, that I may learn 555  
What now has happened. 'T is my mother's voice  
That I have heard. My heart leaps to my mouth;  
My limbs fail under me. Some deadly harm  
Hangs over Priam's sons; far be the hour  
When I shall hear of it. And yet I fear 560  
Lest that Achilles, having got between  
The daring Hector and the city gates,  
May drive him to the plain alone, and quell  
The desperate valor that was ever his;  
For never would he keep the ranks, but ranged 565  
Beyond them, and gave way to no man's might.”  
She spake, and from the royal mansion rushed  
Distractedly, and with a beating heart.  
Her maids went with her. When she reached the tower  
And throng of men, and, standing on the wall, 570

Looked forth, she saw her husband dragged away  
Before the city. Toward the Grecian fleet  
The swift steeds drew him. Sudden darkness came  
Over her eyes, and in a breathless swoon  
She sank away and fell. The ornaments 575  
Dropped from her brow, — the wreath, the woven band,  
The net, the veil which golden Venus gave  
That day when crested Hector wedded her,  
Dowered with large gifts, and led her from her home,  
Eetion's palace. Round her in a throng 580  
Her sisters of the house of Priam pressed,  
And gently raised her in that deathlike swoon.  
But when she breathed again, and to its seat  
The conscious mind returned, as in their arms  
She lay, with sobs and broken speech she said: — 585  
    "Hector, — O wretched me! — we both were born  
To sorrow; thou at Troy, in Priam's house,  
And I at Thebè in Eetion's halls,  
By woody Placos. From a little child  
He reared me there, — unhappy he, and I 590  
Unhappy! O that I had ne'er been born!  
Thou goest down to Hades and the depths  
Of earth, and leavest me in thine abode,  
Widowed, and never to be comforted.

Thy son, a speechless babe, to whom we two  
Gave being,—hapless parents!—cannot have  
Thy loving guardianship now thou art dead,  
Nor be a joy to thee. Though he survive  
The cruel warfare which the sons of Greece  
Are waging, hard and evil yet will be  
His lot hereafter; others will remove  
His landmarks and will make his fields their own.  
The day in which a boy is fatherless  
Makes him companionless; with downcast eyes  
He wanders, and his cheeks are stained with tears.  
Unfed he goes where sit his father's friends,  
And plucks one by the cloak, and by the robe  
Another. One who pities him shall give  
A scanty draught, which only wets his lips,  
But not his palate; while another boy,  
Whose parents both are living, thrusts him thence  
With blows and vulgar clamor: 'Get thee gone!  
Thy father is not with us at the feast.'  
Then to his widowed mother shall return  
Astyanax in tears, who not long since  
Was fed, while sitting in his father's lap,  
On marrow and the delicate fat of lambs.  
And ever when his childish sports had tired

The boy, and sleep came stealing over him,  
He slumbered, softly cushioned, on a couch 620  
And in his nurse's arms, his heart at ease  
And satiate with delights. But now thy son  
Astyanax,—whom so the Trojans name  
Because thy valor guarded gate and tower,—  
Thy care withdrawn, shall suffer many things. 625  
While far from those who gave thee birth, beside  
The roomy ships of Greece, the restless worms  
Shall make thy flesh their banquet when the dogs  
Have gorged themselves. Thy garments yet remain  
Within the palace, delicately wrought 630  
And graceful, woven by the women's hands;  
And these, since thou shalt put them on no more,  
Nor wear them in thy death, I burn with fire  
Before the Trojan men and dames; and all  
Shall see how gloriously thou wert arrayed." 635  
Weeping she spake, and with her wept her maids.



### BOOK XXIII.

SO mourned they in the city; but the Greeks,  
When they had reached the fleet and Hellespont,  
Dispersed, repairing each one to his ship,  
Save that Achilles suffered not his band  
Of Myrmidons to part in disarray. 5

And thus the chief enjoined his warrior friends:—

“Myrmidons, gallant knights, my cherished friends!  
Let us not yet unyoke our firm-paced steeds,  
But bring them with the chariots, and bewail  
Patroclus with the honors due the dead, 10  
And, when we have indulged in grief, release  
Our steeds and take our evening banquet here.”

He spake, and led by him the host broke forth  
In lamentation. Thrice around the dead,  
Weeping, they drave their steeds with stately manes, 15  
While Thetis in their hearts awoke the sense  
Of hopeless loss; their tears bedewed the sands,  
And dropped upon their arms, so brave was he

For whom they sorrowed. Pelous' son began  
The mourning; on the breast of his dead friend        "  
He placed his homicidal hands, and said:—

“Hail thou, Patroclus, even amid the shades!  
For now shall I perform what once I vowed:  
That, dragging Hector hither, I will give  
His corse to dogs, and they shall rend his flesh;        "  
And at thy funeral pile there shall be slain  
Twelve noble Trojan youths, to avenge thy death.”

So spake he, meditating outrages  
To noble Hector's corse, which he had flung  
Beside the bier of Menœtiades,                        "  
Amid the dust. The Myrmidons unbraced  
Their shining brazen armor, and unyoked  
Their neighing steeds, and sat in thick array  
Beside the ship of swift Æacides,  
While he set forth a sumptuous funeral feast.        "  
Many a white ox, that day, beneath the axe  
Fell to the earth, and many bleating goats  
And sheep were slain, and many fattened swine,  
White-toothed, were stretched to roast before the flame  
Of Vulcan, and around the corse the earth                "  
Floated with blood. Meantime the Grecian chiefs  
To noble Agamemnon's royal tent

Led the swift son of Peleus, though he went  
Unwillingly, such anger for the death  
Of his companion burned within his heart. 45  
As soon as they had reached his tent, the king  
Bade the clear-throated heralds o'er the fire  
Place a huge tripod, that Pelides there  
Might wash away the bloody stains he bore.  
Yet would he not, and with an oath replied:— 50  
    “No! by the greatest and the best of gods,  
By Jupiter, I may not plunge my head  
Into the bath before I lay my friend  
Patroclus on the fire, and heap his mound,  
And till my hair is shorn; for never more 55  
In life will be so great a sorrow mine.  
But now attend we to this mournful feast.  
And with the morn, O king of men, command  
That wood be brought, and all things duly done  
Which may beseem a warrior who goes down 60  
Into the lower darkness. Let the flames  
Seize fiercely and consume him from our sight,  
And leave the people to the tasks of war.”  
    He spake; they hearkened and obeyed, and all  
Prepared with diligent hands the meal, and each 65  
Sat down and took his portion of the feast.

And when their thirst and hunger were allayed,  
Most to their tents betook them and to rest.  
But Peleus' son, lamenting bitterly,  
Lay down among his Myrmidons, beside 70  
The murmuring ocean, in the open space,  
Where plashed the billows on the beach. And there,  
When slumber, bringing respite from his cares,  
Came softly and enfolded him,—for much  
His shapely limbs were wearied with the chase 75  
Of Hector round the windy Ilium's walls,—  
The soul of his poor friend Patroclus came,  
Like him in all things,—stature, beautiful eyes,  
And voice, and garments which he wore in life.  
Beside his head the vision stood and spake:— 80  
    “Achilles, sleepest thou, forgetting me?  
Never of me unmindful in my life,  
Thou dost neglect me dead. O, bury me  
Quickly, and give me entrance through the gates  
Of Hades; for the souls, the forms of those 85  
Who live no more, repulse me, suffering not  
That I should join their company beyond  
The river, and I now must wander round  
The spacious portals of the House of Death.  
Give me thy hand, I pray; for never more 90

Shall I return to earth when once the fire  
 Shall have consumed me. Never shall we take  
 Counsel together, living, as we sit  
 Apart from our companions; the hard fate  
 Appointed me at birth hath drawn me down. 95  
 Thou too, O godlike man, wilt fall beneath  
 The ramparts of the noble sons of Troy.  
 Yet this I ask, and if thou wilt obey,  
 This I command thee,—not to let my bones  
 Be laid apart from thine. As we were reared 100  
 Under thy roof together, from the time  
 When first Menœtius brought thee, yet a boy,  
 From Opus, where I caused a sorrowful death;—  
 For by my hand, when wrangling at the dice,  
 Another boy, son of Amphidamas, 105  
 Was slain without design,—and Peleus made  
 His halls my home, and reared me tenderly,  
 And made me thy companion;—so at last  
 May one receptacle, the golden vase  
 Given by thy gracious mother, hold our bones.” 110

The swift Achilles answered: “O most loved  
 And honored, wherefore art thou come, and why  
 Dost thou command me thus? I shall fulfil  
 Obediently thy wish; yet draw thou near,

And let us give at least a brief embrace, 115  
And so indulge our grief." He said, and stretched  
His longing arms to clasp the shade. In vain;  
Away like smoke it went, with gibbering cry,  
Down to the earth. Achilles sprang upright,  
Astonished, clapped his hands, and sadly said: — 120

"Surely there dwell within the realm below  
Both soul and form, though bodiless. All night  
Hath stood the spirit of my hapless friend  
Patroclus near me, sad and sorrowful,  
And asking many duties at my hands, 125  
A marvellous semblance of the living man."

He spake, and moved the hearts of all to grief  
And lamentation. Rosy-fingered Morn  
Dawned on them as around the hapless dead  
They stood and wept. Then Agamemnon sent 130  
In haste from all the tents the mules and men  
To gather wood, and summoned to the task  
Meriones, himself a gallant chief,  
Attendant on the brave Idomeneus.  
These went with woodmen's axes and with ropes 135  
Well twisted, and before them went the mules.  
O'er steep, o'er glen, by straight, by winding ways,  
They journeyed till they reached the woodland wilds

Of Ida fresh with springs, and quickly felled  
With the keen steel the towering oaks that came 140  
Crashing to earth. Then, splitting the great trunks,  
They bound them on the mules, that beat the earth  
With hasty footsteps through the tangled wood,  
Impatient for the plain. Each woodcutter  
Shouldered a tree, for so Meriones, 145  
Companion of the brave Idomeneus,  
Commanded, and at last they laid them down  
In order on the shore, where Peleus' son  
Planned that a mighty sepulchre should rise  
Both for his friend Patroclus and himself. 150  
So brought they to the spot vast heaps of wood,  
And sat them down, a numerous crowd. But then  
Achilles bade his valiant Myrmidons  
Put on their brazen mail and yoke their steeds.  
At once they rose, and put their harness on, 155  
And they who fought from chariots climbed their seats  
With those who reined the steeds. These led the van,  
And after them a cloud of men on foot  
By thousands followed. In the midst was borne  
Patroclus by his comrades. Cutting off 160  
Their hair, they strewed it, covering the dead.  
Behind the corpse, Achilles in his hands

Sustained the head, and wept, for on that day  
He gave to Hades his most cherished friend.

Now when they reached the spot which Peleus' son 165  
Had chosen, they laid down the dead, and piled  
The wood around him, while the swift of foot,  
The great Achilles, bent on other thoughts,  
Standing apart, cut off his amber hair,  
Which for the river Sperchius he had long 170  
Nourished to ample growth, and, sighing, turned  
His eyes upon the dark-blue sea, and said:—

“Sperchius, in vain my father made a vow  
That I, returning to my native shore,  
Should bring my hair, an offering to thee, 175  
And slay a consecrated hecatomb,  
And burn a sacrifice of fifty rams,  
Beside the springs where in a sacred field  
Thy fragrant altar stands. Such was the vow  
Made by the aged man, yet hast thou not 180  
Fulfilled his wish. And now, since I no more  
Shall see my native land, the land I love,  
Let the slain hero bear these locks away.”

He spake, and in his dear companion's hands  
He placed the hair, and all around were moved 185  
To deeper grief; the setting sun had left



The host lamenting, had not Peleus' son  
Addressed Atrides, standing at his side:—

“Atrides, thou whose word the Greeks obey  
Most readily, all mourning has an end. 190  
Dismiss the people from the pyre to take  
Their evening meal, while we with whom it rests  
To pay these mournful duties to the dead  
Will close the rites; but let the chiefs remain.”

This when the monarch Agamemnon heard, 195  
Instantly he dismissed to their good ships  
The people. They who had the dead in charge  
Remained, and heaped the wood, and built a pyre  
A hundred feet each way from side to side.  
With sorrowful hearts they raised and laid the corse 200  
Upon the summit. Then they flayed and dressed  
Before it many fatlings of the flock,  
And oxen with curved feet and crooked horns.  
From these magnanimous Achilles took  
The fat, and covered with it carefully 205  
The dead from head to foot. Beside the bier,  
And leaning toward it, jars of honey and oil  
He placed, and flung, with many a deep-drawn sigh,  
Twelve high-necked steeds upon the pile. Nine hounds  
There were, which from the table of the prince 210

Were daily fed; of these Achilles struck  
The heads from two, and laid them on the wood,  
And after these, and last, twelve gallant sons  
Of the brave Trojans, butchered by the sword;  
For he was bent on evil. To the pile 215  
He put the iron violence of fire,  
And, wailing, called by name the friend he loved:—

“Rejoice, Patroclus, even in the land  
Of souls. Lo! I perform the vow I made;  
Twelve gallant sons of the brave men of Troy 220  
The fire consumes with thee. For Hector’s corse,  
The flames shall not devour it, but the dogs.”

Such was his threat; but Hector was not made  
The prey of dogs, for Venus, born to Jove,  
Drave off by night and day the ravenous tribe, 225  
And with a rosy and ambrosial oil  
Anointed him, that he might not be torn  
When dragged along the earth. Above the spot,  
And all around it, where the body lay,  
Phœbus Apollo drew a veil of clouds 230  
Reaching from heaven, that on his limbs the flesh  
And sinews might not stiffen in the sun.

The flame seized not upon the funeral pile  
Of the dead chief. Pelides, swift of foot,

Bethought him of another rite. He stood ' 235  
Apart, and offered vows to the two winds,  
Boreas and Zephyr. Promising to bring  
Fair offerings to their shrines, and pouring out  
Libations from a golden cup, he prayed  
That they would haste and wrap the pile in flames, 240  
And burn the dead to ashes. At his prayer  
Fleet Iris on a message to the Winds  
Took instant wing. They sat within the halls  
Of murmuring Zephyr, at a solemn feast.  
There Iris lighted on the threshold-stone. 245  
As soon as they beheld her, each arose  
And bade her sit beside him. She refused  
To seat her at the banquet, and replied : —  
“Not now ; for I again must take my way  
Over the ocean currents to the land 250  
Where dwell the Æthiopians, who adore  
The gods with hecatombs, to take my share  
Of sacrifice. Achilles supplicates,  
With promise of munificent offerings,  
Boreas and sounding Zephyrus to come 255  
And blow the funeral structure into flames  
On which, bewailed by all the Grecian host,  
Patroclus lies, and waits to be consumed.”

So spake she, and departed. Suddenly  
Arose the Winds with tumult, driving on 260  
The clouds before them. Soon they reached the deep;  
Beneath the violence of their sounding breath  
The billows heaved. They swept the fertile fields  
Of Troas, and descended on the pyre,  
And mightily it blazed with fearful roar. 265  
All night they howled and tossed the flames. All night  
Stood swift Achilles, holding in his hand  
A double beaker; from a golden jar  
He dipped the wine, and poured it forth, and steeped  
The earth around, and called upon the soul 270  
Of his unhappy friend. As one laments  
A newly married son upon whose corse  
The flames are feeding, and whose death has made  
His parents wretched, so did Peleus' son,  
Burning the body of his comrade, mourn, 275  
As round the pyre he moved with frequent sighs.  
Now when the star that ushers in the day  
Appeared, and after it the morning, clad  
In saffron robes, had overspread the sea,  
The pyre sank wasted, and the flames arose 280  
No longer, and the winds, departing, flew  
Homeward across the Thracian sea, which tossed

And roared with swollen billows as they went.

And now Pelides from the pyre apart

Weary lay down, and gentle slumber soon

285

Came stealing over him. Meantime the Greeks

Gathered round Agamemnon, and the stir

And bustle of their coming woke the chief,

Who sat upright and thus addressed his friends:—

“Atrides, and all ye who lead the hosts

290

Of Greece! our task is, first to quench the pyre

With dark red wine where'er the flames have spread,

And next to gather, with discerning care,

The bones of Menœtiades. And these

May well be known; for in the middle space

295

He lay, and round about him, and apart

Upon the border, were the rest consumed,—

The bodies of the captives and the steeds.

Be his enclosed within a golden vase,

And wrapped around with caul, a double fold,

300

Till I too pass into the realm of Death.

And be a tomb not over-spacious reared,

But of becoming size, which afterward

Ye whom we leave behind in our good ships,

When we are gone, will build more broad and high.”

305

So spake the swift Pelides, and the chiefs

Complied; and first they quenched with dark red wine  
The pyre, where'er the flames had spread, and where  
Lay the deep ashes; then, with many tears,  
Gathered the white bones of their gentle friend, 310  
And laid them in a golden vase, wrapped round  
With caul, a double fold. Within the tents  
They placed them softly, wrapped in delicate lawn,  
Then drew a circle for the sepulchre,  
And, laying its foundations to enclose 315  
The pyre, they heaped the earth, and, having reared  
A mound, withdrew. Achilles yet detained  
The multitude, and made them all sit down,  
A vast assembly. From the ships he brought  
The prizes, — caldrons, tripods, steeds, and mules, 320  
Oxen in sturdy pairs, and graceful maids,  
And shining steel. Then for the swiftest steeds  
A princely prize he offered first, — a maid  
Of peerless form, and skilled in household arts,  
And a two-handled tripod of a size 325  
For two-and-twenty measures. He gave out  
The second prize, — a mare unbroken yet,  
Of six years old, and pregnant with a mule.  
For the third winner in the race he staked  
A caldron that had never felt the fire, 330

Holding four measures, beautiful, and yet  
Untarnished. For the fourth, he offered gold,  
Two talents. For the fifth, and last, remained  
A double vessel never touched by fire.

He rose and stood, and thus addressed the Greeks: — 335

“Atrides, and ye other well-armed Greeks,  
These prizes lie within the chariot-course,  
And wait the charioteers. Were but these games  
In honor of another, then would I  
Contend, and win and carry to my tent 340  
The first among these prizes. For my steeds,  
Ye know, surpass the rest in speed, since they  
Are of immortal birth, by Neptune given  
To Peleus, and by him in turn bestowed  
On me his son. But I and they will keep 345  
Aloof; they miss their skilful charioteer,  
Who washed in limpid water from the fount  
Their manes, and moistened them with softening oil.  
And now they mourn their friend, and sadly stand  
With drooping heads and manes that touch the ground. 350  
Let such of you as trust in their swift steeds  
And their strong cars prepare to join the games.”

Pelides spake: the abler charioteers  
Arose, and, first of all, the king of men,

Eumelus, eminent in horsemanship, 355  
The dear son of Admetus. Then arose  
The valiant son of Tydeus, Diomed,  
And led beneath the yoke the Trojan steeds  
Won from Æneas when Apollo saved  
That chief from death. The son of Atreus next, 360  
The noble Menelaus, yellow-haired,  
Brought two swift coursers underneath the yoke,  
King Agamemnon's Æthè, and with her  
His own Podargus. Echepolus once,  
Anchises' son, sent Æthè as a gift 365  
To Agamemnon, that he might be free  
From following with the army to the heights  
Of Ilium, and enjoy the ease he loved ;  
For Jove had given him wealth, and he abode  
On Sicyon's plains. Now, eager for the race, 370  
She took the yoke. Antilochus, the fourth,  
The gallant son of the magnanimous king,  
Neleian Nestor, harnessed next his steeds  
With stately manes. Swift coursers that were foaled  
At Pylus drew his chariot. To his side 375  
His father came and stood, and spake and gave  
Wise counsels, though the youth himself was wise: —  
“Antilochus, I cannot doubt that Jove



And Neptune both have loved thee, teaching thee,  
Young as thou art, all feats of horsemanship. 380  
Small is the need to instruct thee. Thou dost know  
Well how to turn the goal, and yet thy steeds  
Are slow, and ill for thee may be the event.  
Their steeds are swift, yet have they never learned  
To govern them with greater skill than thou. 385  
Now then, dear son, bethink thee heedfully  
Of all precautions, lest thou miss the prize.  
By skill the woodman, rather than by strength,  
Brings down the oak; by skill the pilot guides  
His wind-tossed galley over the dark sea; 390  
And thus by skill the charioteer o'ercomes  
His rival. He who trusts too much his steeds  
And chariot lets them veer from side to side  
Along the course, nor keeps a steady rein  
Straight on, while one expert in horsemanship, 395  
Though drawn by slower horses, carefully  
Observes the goal, and closely passes it,  
Nor fails to know how soon to turn his course,  
Drawing the leathern reins, and steadily  
Keeps on, and watches him who goes before. 400  
Now must I show the goal which, easily  
Discerned, will not escape thine eye. It stands

An ell above the ground, a sapless post,  
Of oak or larch,—a wood of slow decay  
By rain, and at its foot on either side 405  
Lies a white stone; there narrow is the way,  
But level is the race-course all around.  
The monument it is of one long dead,  
Or haply it has been in former days  
A goal, as the swift-footed Peleus' son 410  
Has now appointed it. Approach it near,  
Driving thy chariot close upon its foot,  
Then in thy seat lean gently to the left  
And cheer the right-hand horse, and ply the lash,  
And give him a loose rein, yet firmly keep 415  
The left-hand courser close beside the goal,—  
So close that the wheel's nave may seem to touch  
The summit of the post; yet strike thou not  
The stone beside it, lest thou lame thy steeds  
And break the chariot, to thy own disgrace 420  
And laughter of the others. My dear son,  
Be on thy guard; for if thou pass the goal  
Before the rest, no man in the pursuit  
Can overtake or pass thee, though he drave  
The noble courser of Adrastus, named 425  
Arion the swift-footed, which a god

Back spring to life, if those of matchless speed  
 Raced here in turn by Lamentation."

Nestor Nestor spoke, and, having thus  
 Given all the mortal nations took his seat 430  
 In his own place. Meriones, the rich,  
 Harness'd his steeds with sturdy manes, and all  
 Mounted their chariots. Lots were cast; the son  
 Of Peleus shook the helmet, and the lot  
 Of Nestor's son, Antilochus, leaped forth; 435  
 And next the lot of King Eumelus came;  
 And Menelaus, mighty with the spear,  
 Had the third lot; Meriones was next;  
 And to the bravest of them all, the son  
 Of Tydeus, fell the final lot and place. 440  
 They stood in order, while Achilles showed  
 The goal far off upon the level plain,  
 And near it, as the umpire of the race,  
 He placed the godlike Phoenix, who had been  
 His father's armor-bearer, to observe 445  
 With judging eye, and bring a true report.

All raised at once the lash above their steeds,  
 And smote them with the reins, and cheered them on  
 With vehement cries. Across the plain they swept,  
 Far from the fleet; beneath them rose the dust, 450

A cloud, a tempest, and their tossing manes  
Were lifted by the wind. And now the cars  
Touched earth, and now were flung into the air.  
Erect the drivers stood, with beating hearts,  
Eager for victory, each encouraging 455  
His steeds, that flew beneath the shroud of dust.

But when they turned their course, and swiftly ran  
Back to the hoary deep to close the course,  
Well did the skill of every chief appear.  
They put their horses to the utmost speed, 460  
And then did the quick-footed steeds that drew  
Eumelus bear him on beyond the rest.  
But with his Trojan coursers Diomed  
Came next, so near it seemed that they would mount  
The car before them, and upon the back 465  
And ample shoulders of Eumelus smote  
Their steaming breath; for as they ran their heads  
Leaned over him. And then would Diomed  
Have passed him by, or would at least have made  
The victory doubtful, had not Phœbus struck, 470  
In his displeasure, from the hero's hand  
The shining scourge. It fell, and to his eyes  
Started indignant tears; for now he saw  
The others gaining on him, while the speed

Of his own steeds, which feared the lash no more, 475  
 Was slackened. Yet Apollo's stratagem  
 Was not unseen by Pallas, who o'ertook  
 The shepherd of the people, and restored  
 The scourge he dropped, and put into his steeds  
 New spirit. In her anger she approached 480  
 Eumelus, snapped his yoke, and caused his mares  
 To start asunder from the track; the pole  
 Was dashed into the ground, and from the seat  
 The chief was flung beside the wheel, his mouth,  
 Elbows, and nostrils torn, his forehead bruised. 485  
 Grief filled his eyes with tears and choked his voice,  
 While Diomed drove by his firm-paced steeds,  
 Outstripping all the rest; for Pallas nerved  
 Their limbs with vigor, and bestowed on him  
 Abundant glory. After him the son 490  
 Of Atreus, fair-haired Menelaus, came,  
 While Nestor's son cheered on his father's steeds:—  
 "On, on! press onward with your utmost speed!  
 Not that I bid you strive against the steeds  
 Of warlike Diomed, for Pallas gives 495  
 Swiftmess to them and glory to the man  
 Who holds the reins; but let us overtake  
 The horses of Atrides, nor submit

To be thus distanced, lest the victory  
Of the mare *Æthè* cover you with shame. 500  
Fleet as ye are, why linger? This at least  
I tell you, and my words will be fulfilled:  
Look not for kindly care at Nestor's hands,  
That shepherd of the people, but for death  
With the sharp steel, if through your fault we take 505  
A meaner prize. Then onward and away,  
With all your strength, for this is my design,—  
To pass by Menelaus where the way  
Is narrow, and he cannot thwart my plan."

He spake, and they who feared their master's threat 510  
Mended their speed awhile. The warlike son  
Of Nestor saw just then the narrow pass  
Within the hollow way, a furrow ploughed  
By winter floods, which there had torn the course  
And deepened it. Atrides, to avoid 515  
The clash of wheels, drave thither; thither too  
Antilochus—who turned his firm-paced steeds  
A little from the track in which they ran—  
Followed him close. Atrides saw with fear,  
And shouted to Antilochus aloud:— 520

"Antilochus, thou drivest rashly; rein  
Thy horses in. The way is narrow here,

But soon will broaden, and thou then canst pass.  
Beware lest with thy chariot-wheels thou dash  
Against my own, and harm befall us both."

525

He spake; but all the more Antilochus  
Urged on his coursers with the lash, as if  
He had not heard. As far as flies a quoit  
Thrown from the shoulder of a vigorous youth  
Who tries his strength, so far they ran abreast.  
The horses of Atrides then fell back;  
He slacked the reins; for much he feared the steeds  
Would dash against each other in the way,  
And overturn the sumptuous cars, and fling  
The charioteers contending for the prize  
Upon the dusty track. With angry words  
The fair-haired Menelaus chided thus:—

530

535

"Antilochus, there is no man so prone  
As thou to mischief, and we greatly err,  
We Greeks, who call thee wise. Go now, and yet  
Thou shalt not take the prize without an oath."

540

Again he spake, encouraging his steeds:  
"Check not your speed, nor sorrowfully stand:  
Their feet and knees will fail with weariness  
Before your own; they are no longer young."

545

He spake; the coursers, honoring his voice,

Ran with fresh speed, and soon were near to those  
Of Nestor's son. Meantime the assembled Greeks  
Sat looking where the horses scoured the plain  
And filled the air with dust. Idomeneus, 550  
The lord of Crete, descried the coursers first,  
For on a height he sat above the crowd.  
He heard the chief encouraging his steeds,  
And knew him, and he marked before the rest  
A courser, chestnut-colored save a spot 555  
Upon the middle of the forehead, white,  
And round as the full moon. And then he stood  
Upright, and from his place harangued the Greeks:—  
“O friends, the chiefs and leaders of the Greeks,  
Am I the sole one that describes the steeds, 560  
Or do ye also? Those who lead the race,  
I think, are not the same, and with them comes  
A different charioteer. The mares, which late  
Were foremost, may have somewhere come to harm.  
I saw them first to turn the goal, and now 565  
I can no more discern them, though my sight  
Sweeps the whole Trojan plain from side to side.  
Either the charioteer has dropped the reins,  
And could not duly round the goal, or else  
Met with disaster at the turn, o'erthrown, 570



His chariot broken, and the affrighted mares  
Darting, unmastered, madly from the way.  
But rise: look forth yourselves. I cannot well  
Discern, but think the charioteer is one  
Who, born of an Ætolian stock, commands  
Among the Argives,—valiant Diomed,  
A son of Tydeus, tamer of wild steeds.”

575

And Ajax, swift of foot, Oileus' son,  
Answered with bitter words: “Idomeneus,  
Why this perpetual prating? Far away  
The mares with rapid hoofs are traversing  
The plain, and thou art not the youngest here  
Among the Argives, nor hast such sharp eyes  
Beneath thy brows, yet must thou chatter still.  
Among thy betters here it ill becomes  
A man like thee to be so free of tongue.  
The coursers of Eumelus, which at first  
Outran the rest, are yet before them all,  
And he is drawing near and holds the reins.”

580

585

The Cretan leader angrily rejoined:  
“Ajax, thou railer, first in brawls, yet known  
As in all else below the other Greeks,  
A man of brutal mood, come, let us stake  
A tripod or a caldron, and appoint

590

As umpire Agamemnon, to decide 363  
Which horses are the foremost in the race,  
That when thou lovest thou mayst be convinced."

He spake: Oilean Ajax, swift of foot,  
Started in anger from his seat, to cast  
Reproaches back, and long and fierce had been 366  
The quarrel if Achilles had not risen,  
And said: "No longer let this strife go on,  
Idomeneus and Ajax! Ill such words  
Become you; ye would blame in other men  
What now ye do. Sit then among the rest, 369  
And watch the race; for soon the charioteers  
Contending for the victory will be here,  
And each of you—for well ye know the steeds  
Of the Greek chieftains—for himself will see  
Whose hold the second place, and whose are first." 372

He spake: Tydides rapidly drew near,  
Lashing the shoulders of his steeds, and they  
Seemed in the air as, to complete the course,  
They flew along, and flung the dust they trod  
Back on the charioteer. All bright with tin 375  
And gold, the car rolled after them; its tires  
Made but a slender trace in the light dust,  
So rapidly they ran. And now he stopped

Within the circle, while his steeds were steeped  
In sweat, that fell in drops from neck and breast. 620  
Then from his shining seat he leaped, and laid  
His scourge against the yoke. Brave Sthenelus  
Came forward, and at once received the prize  
For Diomed, and bade his comrades lead  
The maid away, and in their arms bear off 625  
The tripod, while himself unyoked the steeds.

Next the Neleian chief, Antilochus,  
Came with his coursers. More by fraud than speed  
He distanced Menelaus, yet that chief  
Drave his fleet horses near him. Just so far 630  
As runs the wheel behind a steed that draws  
His master swiftly o'er the plain, his tail  
Touching the tire with its long hairs, and small  
The space between them as the spacious plain  
Is traversed, Menelaus just so far 635  
Was distanced by renowned Antilochus.  
For though at first he fell as far behind  
As a quoit's cast, yet was he gaining ground  
Rapidly, now that Agamemnon's mare,  
Æthè the stately-maned, increased her speed, 640  
And Menelaus, had the race for both  
Been longer, would have passed his rival by,

Nor left the victory doubtful. After him,  
A spear's throw distant, came Meriones,  
The gallant comrade of Idomeneus, 645  
Whose full-maned steeds were slower than the rest,  
And he unskilled in contests such as these.  
And last of all Eumelus came. He drew  
His showy chariot after him, and drave  
His steeds before him. Great Achilles saw 650  
With pity, and from where he stood among  
The Greeks addressed him thus with wingèd words:—  
    "The ablest horseman brings his steeds the last,  
But let us, as is just, confer on him  
The second prize; Tydides takes the first." 655  
    He spake, and all approved his words; and now  
The mare, to please the Greeks, had been bestowed  
Upon Eumelus, if Antilochus,  
Son of magnanimous Nestor, had not risen  
To plead for justice with Achilles thus:— 660  
    "Achilles, I shall deem it grave offence  
If thou fulfil thy word; for thou wilt take  
My prize, because thou seest that this man's car  
And his fleet steeds have suffered injury,  
Though he be skilful. Yet he should have prayed 665  
To the good gods; then had he not been seen

Bringing his ~~stock~~ the last. But if thou feel  
 Compassion for him, and if so thou please,  
 Large store of brass and gold is in thy tent,  
 And thine are cattle, and handmaidens thine, 670  
 And firm-paced steeds; hereafter give of these  
 A nobler largess, or bestow it now,  
 And hear the Greeks applaud thee. But this prize  
 I yield not; let the warrior who may claim  
 To take it try with me his strength of arm." 675

He ceased: the noble son of Peleus smiled,  
 And, pleased to see Antilochus succeed,—  
 For he was a beloved friend,—he spake  
 These wingèd words: "Since, then, Antilochus,  
 Thou wilt that I bestow some recompense 680  
 Upon Eumelus from my store, I give  
 The brazen corselet which my arm in war  
 Took from Asteropæus, edged around  
 With shining tin,—a gift of no mean price."

He ceased, and sent his friend Automedon 685  
 To bring it from the tent. He went and brought  
 The corselet, and Eumelus joyfully  
 Received it from Achilles. Then arose,  
 Among them Menelaus, ill at ease,  
 And angry with Antilochus. He took 690

The sceptre from a herald's hand, who hushed  
The crowd to silence, and the hero spake:—

“Antilochus, who wert till now discreet,  
What hast thou done? Thou hast disgraced my skill  
And wronged my steeds by thrusting in thine own, 695  
Which were less fleet, before them. Now, ye chiefs  
And leaders of the Achaians, judge between  
This man and me, and judge impartially,  
Lest that some warrior of the Greeks should say  
That Menelaus, having overcome 700  
Antilochus by falsehood, led away  
The mare a prize; for his were slower steeds,  
But he the mightier man in feats of arms.  
Nay, I myself will judge; and none of all  
The Greeks will censure me, for what I do 705  
Will be but just. Antilochus, step forth,  
Illustrious as thou art, and in due form,  
Standing before thy horses and thy car,  
And taking in thy hand the pliant scourge  
Which thou just now hast wielded, touch thy steeds, 710  
And swear by Neptune, whose embrace surrounds  
The earth, that thou hast wittingly employed  
No stratagem to break my chariot's speed.”

And thus discreet Antilochus replied:

“Have patience with me: I am younger far 715  
Than thou, King Menelaus; thou art both  
My elder and my better. Thou dost know  
The faults to which the young are ever prone;  
The will is quick to act, the judgment weak.  
Bear with me then. The mare which I received 720  
I cheerfully make over to thy hands.  
And if thou wilt yet more of what I have,  
I give it willingly and instantly,  
Rather, O loved of Jove, than lose a place  
In thy good-will, and sin against the gods.” 725

The son of large-souled Nestor, speaking thus,  
Led forth the mare, and gave her to the hand  
Of Menelaus, o'er whose spirit came  
A gladness. As upon a field of wheat  
Bristling with ears gathers the freshening dew, 730  
So was his spirit gladdened in his breast,  
And he bespake the youth with wingèd words:—

“Antilochus, now shall my anger cease,  
For hitherto thou hast not shown thyself  
Foolish or fickle, though the heat of youth 735  
Just now hath led thee wrong. In time to come,  
Beware to practise stealthy arts on men  
Of higher rank than thou. No other Greek

Would easily have made his peace with me.  
But thou hast suffered much, and much hast done,— 740  
Thou, and thy worthy father, and his son,  
Thy brother,—for my sake. I therefore yield  
To thy petition; yet I give to thee  
The mare, though mine she be, that these who stand  
Around us may perceive that I am not 745  
Of unforgiving or unyielding mood.”

He spake, and to Noëmon gave the mare,—  
Noëmon, comrade of Antilochus,—  
To lead her thence, while for himself he took  
The shining caldron. Then Meriones, 750  
Fourth in the race, received the prize of gold,—  
Two talents. But the fifth prize and the last,  
The double goblet, still was left unclaimed;  
And this Achilles carried through the crowd  
Of Greeks, and placed in Nestor's hands, and said:— 755

“Receive thou this, O ancient man, to keep  
In memory of the funeral honors paid  
Patroclus, whom thou never more shalt see  
Among the Greeks. I give this prize, which thou  
Hast not contended for, since thou wilt wield 760  
No more the cestus, nor wilt wrestle more,  
Nor hurl the javelin at the mark, nor join



The foot-race; age lies heavy on thy limbs."

He spake, and gave the prize, which Nestor took,  
Well pleased, and thus with wingèd words replied: — 765

"Son, thou hast spoken rightly, for these limbs  
Are strong no longer; neither feet nor hands  
Move on each side with vigor as of yore.  
Would I were but as young, with strength as great,  
As when the Epeians in Buprasium laid 770  
King Amarynceus in the sepulchre,  
And funeral games were offered by his sons!  
Then of the Epeians there was none like me,  
Nor of the Pylian youths, nor yet among  
The brave Ætolians. In the boxing match 775  
I took the prize from Clytomedes, son  
Of Enops, and in wrestling overcame  
Ancæus the Pleuronian, who rose up  
Against me. In the foot-race I outstripped,  
Fleet as he was, Iphiclus, and beyond 780  
Phyleus and Polydore I threw the spear.  
Only the sons of Actor won the race  
Against me with their chariot, and they won  
Through force of numbers. Much they envied me,  
And feared lest I should bear away the prize; 785  
For largest in that contest of the steeds

Was the reward, and they were two, — one held,  
Steadily held, the reins, the other swung  
The lash. Such was I once. Now feats like these  
Belong to other, younger men, and I, 790  
Though eminent among the heroes once,  
Must do as sad old age admonishes.  
Go thou, and honor thy friend's funeral  
With games. Thy gift I willingly accept,  
Rejoicing that thy thoughts revert to one 795  
Who loves thee, and that thou forgettest not  
To pay the honor due to me among  
The Greeks. The gods will give thee thy reward."

He ceased. The son of Peleus, having heard  
This praise from Nestor, left him, and passed through 800  
The mighty concourse of the Greeks. He laid  
Before them prizes for the difficult strife  
Between the boxers. To the middle space  
He led a mule, and bound him, six years old  
And strong for toil, unbroken and most hard 805  
To break, while to the vanquished he assigned  
A goblet. Rising, he addressed the host:—

"Ye sons of Atreus and ye well-armed Greeks,  
We call for two of the most skilled to strive  
For these, by striking with the lifted fist ; 810

And he to whom Apollo shall decree  
The victory, acknowledged by you all,  
Shall have this sturdy mule to lead away.  
The vanquished takes this goblet as his meed."

He spake. A warrior strong and huge of limb, 815  
Skilled in the cestus, named Epeius, son  
Of Panopeus, rose at the word, and laid  
His hand upon the sturdy mule, and said:—

"Let him appear whose lot will be to take  
The goblet. No man of the Grecian host 820  
Will get the mule by overcoming me  
In combat with the cestus,—so I deem.  
In that I claim to be the best man here.  
And should it not suffice that in the war  
Others surpass me? All cannot excel 825  
In everything alike. I promise this,  
And shall fulfil my word,—that I will crush  
His body, and will break his bones. His friends  
Should all remain upon the ground to bear  
Their comrade off when beaten by my hand." 830

He spake, and all were silent. Only rose  
Euryalus, whose father was the king  
Mecisteus of Talaïon's line, the same  
Who went to Thebes and overcame, of old,

In all the funeral games of Œdipus, 835  
The sons of Cadmus. To Euryalus  
Came Diomed, the spearman, bidding him  
Expect the victory which he greatly wished  
His friend might gain. Around his waist he drew  
A girdle, adding straps that from the hide 840  
Of a wild bull were cut with dextrous care.  
And, fully now arrayed, the twain stepped forth  
Into the middle space, and both began  
The combat. Lifting their strong arms, they brought  
Their heavy hands together. Fearfully 845  
Was heard the crash of jaws; from every limb  
The sweat was streaming. As Euryalus  
Looked round, his noble adversary sprang  
And smote him on the cheek,—too rude a blow  
To be withstood; his shapely limbs gave way 850  
Beneath him. As upon the weedy shore,  
When the fresh north-wind stirs the water's face,  
A fish leaps forth to light, and then again  
The dark wave covers it, so sprang and fell  
The chief. Magnanimous Epeius gave 855  
His hands and raised him up; his friends came round  
And led him thence with dragging feet, and head  
That drooped from side to side, while from his mouth

Came dotted blood. They placed him in the midst,  
Unconscious still, and bent and took the cup. 860

Then, third in order, for the wrestling-match  
The son of Peleus brought and showed the Greeks  
Yet other prizes. To the conqueror  
A tripod for the hearth, of ample size,  
He offered; twice six oxen, as the Greeks 865  
Esteemed it, were its price. And next he placed  
In view a damsel for the vanquished, trained  
In household arts; four heaves were deemed her price.

Then rose Achilles, and addressed the Greeks:  
"Ye who would try your fortune in this strife, 870  
Arise." He spake, and mighty Ajax rose,  
The son of Telamon, and after him  
The wise Ulysses, trained to stratagems.  
They, girding up their loins, came forth and stood  
In the mid space, and there with vigorous arms 875  
They clasped each other, locked like rafters framed  
By some wise builder for the lofty roof  
Of a great mansion proof against the winds.  
Then their backs creaked beneath the powerful strain  
Of their strong hands; the sweat ran down their limbs; 880  
Large wheelks upon their sides and shoulders rose,  
Crimson with blood. Still eagerly they strove

For victory and the tripod. Yet in vain  
Ulysses labored to supplant his foe,  
And throw him to the ground, and equally 885  
Did Ajax strive in vain, for with sheer strength  
Ulysses foiled his efforts. When they saw  
That the Greeks wearied of the spectacle,  
The mighty Telamonian Ajax said:—

“Son of Laertes, nobly born and trained 890  
To wise expedients, lift me up, or I  
Will lift up thee; and leave the rest to Jove.”

He spake, and raised Ulysses from the ground,  
Who dealt, with ready stratagem, a blow  
Upon the ham of Ajax, and the limb 895  
Gave way; the hero fell upon his back,  
And on his breast Ulysses, while the host  
Stood wondering and amazed. Ulysses strove,  
In turn, to lift his rival, but prevailed  
Only to move him from his place; he caught 900  
The knee of Ajax in his own, and both  
Came to the ground together, soiled with dust.  
They rose to wrestle still, but from his seat  
Achilles started, and forbade them thus:—

“Contend no longer, nor exhaust your strength 905  
With struggling; there is victory for both,

And equal prizes. Now depart, and leave  
The field of contest to the other Greeks."

He spake: they listened and obeyed, and wiped  
The dust away, and put their garments on. 910  
And then the son of Peleus placed in sight  
Prizes of swiftmess,—a wrought silver cup  
That held six measures, and in beauty far  
Excelled all others known; the cunning hands  
Of the Sidonian artisans had given 915  
Its graceful shape, and over the dark sea  
Men of Phœnicia brought it, with their wares,  
To the Greek harbors; they bestowed it there  
On Thoas. Afterward Euneüs, son  
Of Jason, gave it to the hero-chief, 920  
Patroclus, to redeem a captive friend,  
Lycaon, Priam's son. Achilles now  
Brought it before the assembly as a prize,  
For which, in honor of the friend he loved,  
The swiftest runners of the host should strive. 925  
Next, for the second in the race, he showed  
A noble fatling ox; and for the last,  
Gold, half a talent. Then he stood and said  
To the Achaians: "Those who would contend  
For these rewards, rise up." And then arose 930

Oïlean Ajax, fleet of foot; and next  
Ulysses the sagacious; last upstood  
Antilochus, the son of Nestor, known  
As swiftest of the youths. In due array  
They stood; Achilles showed the goal. At once 935  
Forward they sprang. Oïlean Ajax soon  
Gained on the rest, but close behind him ran  
The great Ulysses. As a shapely maid  
Flinging the shuttle draws with careful hand  
The thread that fills the warp, and so brings near 940  
The shuttle to her bosom, just so near  
To Ajax ran Ulysses, in the prints  
Made by his rival's feet, before the dust  
Fell back upon them. As he ran, his breath  
Smote on the head of Ajax. All the Greeks 945  
Shouted applause to him, encouraging  
His ardor for the victory; but when now  
They neared the goal, Ulysses silently  
Prayed thus to Pallas: "Goddess, hear my prayer,  
And help these feet to win." The goddess heard, 950  
And lightened all his limbs, his feet, his hands;  
And just as they were rushing on the prize,  
Ajax, in running, slipped and fell—the work  
Of Pallas—where in heaps the refuse lay



From entrails of the bellowing oxen slain 955  
In honor of Patroclus by the hand  
Of swift Achilles. Mouth and nostrils both  
Were choked with filth. The much-enduring man  
Ulysses, coming first, received the cup,  
While Ajax took the ox, and as he stood 960  
Holding the animal's horn and spitting forth  
The dirt, he said to those around: "'T is plain  
The goddess caused my feet to slide; she aids  
Ulysses like a mother." So he said,  
And the Greeks laughed. And then Antilochus 965  
Received the third reward, and with a smile  
Said to the Greeks: "I tell you all, my friends,  
What you must know already, that the gods  
Honor the aged ever. Ajax stands  
Somewhat in years above me, but this chief 970  
Who takes the prize is of a former age  
And earlier race of men; they call him old,  
But hard it were for any Greek to vie  
With him in swiftness, save Achilles here."  
Such praise he gave Pelides, fleet of foot, 975  
Who answered: "Thy good word, Antilochus,  
Shall not be vainly spoken. I will add  
Yet half a talent to thy gold." He said,

And gave the gold; Antilochus, well pleased,  
Received it. Then Pelides brought a spear 980  
Of ponderous length into the middle space,  
And laid it down, and placed a buckler near  
And helmet, which had been Sarpedon's arms,  
And which Patroclus won of him in war.

Then stood Achilles and addressed the Greeks:— 985

“I call on two, the bravest of the host,  
To arm themselves and take their spears in hand,  
And in a contest for these weapons put  
Each other to the proof. Whoever first  
Shall wound his adversary, piercing through 990  
The armor to the delicate skin beneath,  
And draw the crimson blood, to him I give  
This beautiful sword of Thrace, with silver studs,  
Won from Asteropæus. And let both  
Bear off these arms, a common gift, and both 995  
Shall sit and banquet nobly in my tent.”

He spake, and Telamonian Ajax rose,  
The large of limb; Tydides Diomed,  
The strong, rose also. When they had put on  
Their arms apart from all the host, they came, 1000  
All eager for the combat, to the lists,  
And fearful was their aspect. All the Greeks

Looked on with dread and wonder, and when now  
Stood face to face the warriors, thrice they rushed  
Against each other; thrice they dealt their blows. 1005  
Then Ajax thrust through Diomed's round shield  
His weapon, but it wounded not; the mail  
Beyond it stopped the stroke. Tydides aimed  
Over his adversary's mighty shield  
A blow to reach his neck. The Greeks, alarmed 1010  
For Ajax, shouted that the strife should cease,  
And both divide the prize. Achilles heard,  
But gave to Diomed the ponderous sword,  
Its sheath, and the fair belt from which it hung.  
Again Pelides placed before the host 1015  
A mass of iron, shapeless from the forge,  
Which once the strong Eëtion used to hurl;  
But swift Achilles, when he took his life,  
Brought it with other booty in his ships  
To Troas. Rising, he addressed the Greeks:— 1020  
“Stand forth, whoever will contend for this,  
And if broad fields and rich be his, this mass  
Will last him many years. The man who tends  
His flocks, or guides his plough, need not be sent  
To town for iron; he will have it here.” 1025  
He spake, and warlike Polypætes rose.

Uprose the strong Leonteus, who in form  
Was like a god. The son of Telamon  
Rose also, and Epeius nobly born;  
Each took his place. Epeius seized the mass, 1030  
And sent it whirling. All the Achaians laughed.  
The loved of Mars, Leonteus, flung it next,  
And after him the son of Telamon,  
The large-limbed Ajax, from his vigorous arm  
Sent it beyond the mark of both. But when 1035  
The sturdy warrior Polypætes took  
The mass in hand, as far as o'er his beeves  
A herdsman sends his whirling staff, so far  
This cast outdid the rest. A shout arose;  
The friends of sturdy Polypætes took 1040  
The prize, and bore it to the hollow ships.  
Achilles for the archers brought forth steel,  
Tempered for arrow-heads, — ten axes, each  
With double edge, and single axes ten, —  
And from a galley's azure prow took off 1045  
A mast, and reared it on the sands afar,  
And, tying to its summit by the foot  
A timorous dove, he bade them aim at her:  
"Whoever strikes the bird shall bear away  
The double axes to his tent; while he 1050

Who hits the cord, but not the bird, shall take  
The single axes, as the humbler prize."

He ceased, and then arose the stalwart king,  
Teucer; then also rose Meriones,  
The valiant comrade of Idomeneus.

1055

The lots were shaken in a brazen helm,  
And Teucer's lot was first. He straightway sent  
A shaft with all his strength, but made no vow  
Of a choice hecatomb of firstling lambs  
To Phœbus, monarch-god. He missed the bird,  
Such was the will of Phœbus, but he struck,  
Close to her foot, the cord that made her fast.  
The keen shaft severed it; the dove flew up  
Into the heavens; the fillet dropped to earth  
Amid the loud applauses of the Greeks.

1060

1065

And then Meriones made haste to take  
The bow from Teucer's hand. Long time he held  
The arrow aimed, the while he made a vow  
To Phœbus, the great archer, promising  
A chosen hecatomb of firstling lambs;  
Then, looking toward the dove, as high in air  
She wheeled beneath the clouds, he pierced her breast  
Beneath the wing; the shaft went through and fell,  
Fixed in the ground, beside Meriones,

1070

While the bird settled on the galley's mast 1075  
With drooping head and open wings. The breath  
Forsook her soon, and down from that high perch  
She fell to earth. The people all looked on,  
Admiring and amazed. Meriones  
Took up the double axes as his prize, 1080  
While Teucer bore the others to the fleet.

And then Pelides brought into the midst  
A ponderous spear, and laid a caldron down  
Which never felt the fire, inwrought with flowers,  
Its price an ox. And then the spearmen rose. 1085  
Atrides Agamemnon, mighty king,  
First rose, and after him Meriones,  
The brave companion of Idomeneus;  
And thus to both the swift Achilles said:—

“O son of Atreus, for we know how far 1090  
Thou dost excel all others, and dost cast  
The spear with passing strength and skill, bear thou  
This prize, as victor, to the roomy ships,  
And if it please thee, let us, as I wish,  
Give to our brave Meriones the spear.” 1095

He spake, and Agamemnon, king of men,  
Complied, and gave Meriones in hand  
The brazen spear, while to Talthybius,  
The herald, he consigned the greater prize.

*BOOK XXIV.*

THE assembly was dissolved, the people all  
Dispersed to their swift galleys, and prepared  
With food and gentle slumber to refresh  
Their wearied frames. But still Achilles wept,  
Remembering his dear comrade. Sleep, whose sway 5  
Is over all, came not; he turned and tossed,  
Still yearning for his strong and valiant friend  
Patroclus. All that they had ever done  
Together, all the hardships they had borne,  
The battles fought with heroes, the wild seas 10  
O'erpassed, came thronging on his memory.  
He shed warm tears, as now upon his sides,  
Now on his back, now on his face he lay.  
Then, starting from his couch, he wandered forth  
In sorrow by the margin of the deep. 15  
Nor did the morn that rose o'er sea and shore  
Dawn unperceived by him; for then he yoked  
His fleet steeds to the chariot, and made fast

The corse of Hector, that it might be dragged  
After the wheels. Three times around the tomb 20  
Of Menœtiades he dragged the slain,  
Then turned and sought his tent, again to rest,  
And left him there stretched out amid the dust  
With the face downward. Yet Apollo, moved  
With pity for the hero, kept him free 25  
From soil or stain, though dead, and o'er him held  
The golden ægis, lest, when roughly dragged  
Along the ground, the body might be torn.

So in his anger did Achilles treat  
Unworthily the noble Hector's corse. 30  
The blessed gods themselves with pity looked  
Upon the slain, and bade the vigilant one,  
The Argus-queller, bear him thence by stealth.  
This counsel pleased the immortals all, except  
Juno and Neptune and the blue-eyed maid, 35  
And these persisted in their wrath. To them  
Ilium, the hallowed city, and its king,  
Priam, and all his people, from the first  
Were hateful; 't was for Alexander's fault,  
Affronting the two goddesses what time 40  
They sought his cottage, and preferring her  
Who ministered to his calamitous love.



But now, when the twelfth morning from that day  
Arose, Apollo spake among the gods:—

“Cruel are ye, O gods, and prone to wrong. 45  
For was not Hector wont before your shrines  
To burn the thighs of chosen bulls and goats?  
And now that he is dead ye venture not  
To rescue him, and let his wife and son  
And mother and King Priam look again 50  
Upon his face. Soon would they light the pile,  
And burn the dead, and pay the funeral rite.  
Ye seek to favor, O ye gods, that pest,  
Achilles, in whose breast there dwells no love  
Of justice, nor a temper to be moved 55  
By prayers, but who delights in savage deeds.  
And as a lion, conscious of vast strength  
And scornful of resistance, falls upon  
The shepherd’s flock, and slays for his repast,  
Thus with Achilles neither mercy dwells 60  
Nor shame, which often profits, often harms  
Mankind. For when another man has met  
A greater grief than he, — has lost, perchance,  
A brother or a son, — he dries at length  
His tears, and ceases to lament; for fate 65  
Bestows the power to suffer patiently.

But this Achilles, after he has spoiled  
The godlike Hector of his life in war,  
Hath bound him to his chariot, and hath dragged  
The corse around his dear companion's tomb, 70  
Unseemly is the deed, and small will be  
The good it brings him. Brave although he be,  
We may be angry with him when he thus  
Insults a portion of insensible earth."

The white-armed Juno was incensed, and spake: 75  
"So might'st thou say, God of the silver bow,  
Were equal honor to Achilles due  
And Hector. Hector is a mortal man,  
And suckled at a woman's breast. Not so  
Achilles; he was born of one of us, 80  
A goddess whom I nurtured and brought up  
And gave to Peleus. Ye were present all,  
Ye gods, when they were wedded. Thou wert there  
To share the marriage banquet, harp in hand,  
Thou plotter with the vile, thou faithless one!" 85

Then answered cloud-compelling Jove, and said:  
"Let not thy anger rise against the gods,  
O Juno, for the honor of the chiefs  
Shall not be equal. Yet of all the race  
Of mortals dwelling in the city of Troy 90

Was Hector dearest to the gods; to me  
He ever was; and never did he fail  
To offer welcome gifts. My altar ne'er  
Lacked fitting feast, libation, and the fume  
Of incense,—hallowed rites which are our due. 95  
Yet seek we not to steal away the corse  
Of valiant Hector; that we could not do  
Without his slayer's knowledge, who by night  
And day is ever near to him and keeps  
Watch o'er him like a mother. Let some god 100  
Call hither Thetis. I will counsel her  
Prudently, that Achilles may receive  
Ransom from Priam, and restore his son."

He ceased, and with the swiftness of the storm  
Rose Iris up, to be his messenger. 105  
Half-way 'twixt Samos and the rugged coast  
Of Imbrus down she plunged to the dark sea,  
Entering the deep with noise. Far down she sank  
As sinks the ball of lead, that, sliding o'er  
A wild bull's horn, bears into ocean's depths 110  
Death to the greedy fishes. There she found  
Thetis within her roomy cave, among  
The goddesses of ocean, seated round  
In full assembly. Thetis in the midst

Bewailed the fate of her own blameless son, 115  
About to perish on the fertile soil  
Of Troy, and far from Greece. The swift of wing,  
Iris, approached her and addressed her thus:—

“Arise, O Thetis. Father Jupiter,  
Whose counsel stands forever, sends for thee.” 120

And silver-footed Thetis answered him:  
“Why should that potent deity require  
My presence, who have many griefs, and shrink  
From mingling with immortals? Yet I go,  
Perforce, for never doth he speak in vain.” 125

So spake the goddess-queen, and, speaking, took  
Her mantle,—darker web was never worn,—  
And onward went. Wind-footed Iris led  
The way; the waters of the sea withdrew  
On either side. They climbed the steepy shore, 130  
And took their way to heaven. They found the son  
Of Saturn, him of the far-sounding voice,  
With all the blessed, ever-living gods  
Assembled round him. Close to Father Jove  
She took her seat, for Pallas yielded it, 135  
And Juno put a beautiful cup of gold  
Into her hand, and spake consoling words.  
She drank and gave it back, and thus began

The father of immortals and of men:—

“Thou comest to Olympus, though in grief, 140  
O goddess Thetis, and I know the cause  
That makes thee sad and will not from thy thoughts;  
Yet let me now declare why I have called  
Thee hither. For nine days the immortal gods  
Have been at strife concerning Hector’s corse 145  
And Peleus’ son, the spoiler. They have asked  
The vigilant Argus-queller to remove  
The dead by stealth. But I must yet bestow  
Fresh honor on Achilles, and thus keep  
Thy love and reverence. Now descend at once 150  
Into the camp and carry to thy son  
My message: say that it offends the gods,  
And me the most, that in his spite he keeps  
The corse of Hector at the beakèd ships,  
Refusing to restore it. He perchance 155  
Will listen, and, revering me, give back  
The slain. And I will send a messenger,  
Iris, to large-souled Priam, bidding him  
Hasten in person to the Grecian fleet,  
To ransom his beloved son, and bring 160  
Achilles gifts that shall appease his rage.”

He spake: the goddess of the silver feet,

Thetis, obeyed, and with precipitate flight  
Descended from the mountain-peaks. She came  
To her son's tent, and found him uttering moans 165  
Continually, while his beloved friends  
Were busy round him; they prepared a feast,  
And had just slain within the tent a ewe  
Of ample size and fleece. She took her seat  
Beside her son, and smoothed his brow, and said:— 170

“How long, my son, wilt thou lament and grieve  
And pine at heart, abstaining from the feast  
And from thy couch? Yet well it is to seek  
A woman's love. Thy life will not be spared  
Long time to me, for death and cruel fate 175  
Stand near thee. Listen to me; I am come  
A messenger from Jove, who bids me say  
The immortals are offended, and himself  
The most, that thou shouldst in thy spite detain  
The corse of Hector at the beakèd ships, 180  
Refusing its release. Comply thou then,  
And take the ransom and restore the dead.”

And thus Achilles, swift of foot, replied:  
“Let him who brings the ransom come and take  
The body, if it be the will of Jove.” 185

Thus did the mother and the son confer

Among the galleys, and between them passed  
Full many a wingèd word, while Saturn's son  
Bade Iris go with speed to sacred Troy: —

“Fleet Iris, haste thee. Leave the Olympian seats, 190  
And send magnanimous Priam to the fleet,  
To ransom his dear son, and bear him back  
To Ilium. Let him carry gifts to calm  
The anger of Achilles. He should go  
Alone, no Trojan with him, save a man 195  
In years, a herald, who may guide the mules  
And strong-wheeled chariot, harnessed to bear back  
Him whom the great Achilles has o'erthrown;  
And let him fear not death nor other harm,  
For we will send a guide to lead him safe, 200  
The Argus-queller, till he stand beside  
Achilles; and when once he comes within  
The warrior's tent, Achilles will not raise  
His hand to slay, but will restrain the rest.  
Nor mad, nor rash, nor criminal is he, 205  
And will humanely spare a suppliant man.”

He spake, and Iris, the swift messenger,  
Whose feet are like the wind, went forth with speed,  
And came to Priam's palace, where she found  
Sorrow and wailing. Round the father sat 210

His sons within the hall, and steeped with tears  
Their garments. In the midst the aged man  
Sat with a cloak wrapped round him, and much dust  
Strewn on his head and neck, which, when he rolled  
Upon the earth, he gathered with his hands. 215

His daughters and the consorts of his sons  
Filled with their cries the mansion, sorrowing  
For those, the many and brave, who now lay slain  
By Grecian hands. The ambassadress of Jove  
Stood beside Priam, and in soft, low tones, 220  
While his limbs shook with fear, addressed him thus:—

“Be comforted, and have no fear; for I  
Am come, Dardanian Priam, not to bring  
Mischief, but blessing. I am sent to thee  
A messenger from Jove, who, though afar, 225  
Pities thee and will aid thee. He who rules  
Olympus bids thee ransom thy slain son,  
The noble Hector, carrying gifts to calm  
The anger of Achilles. Thou shouldst go  
Alone, no Trojan with thee, save a man 230  
In years, a herald, who shall guide the mules  
And strong-wheeled chariot, harnessed to bring back  
Him whom the great Achilles has o’erthrown.  
And have no fear of death or other harm;



A guide shall go with thee to lead thee safe, 235  
The Argus-queller, till thou stand beside  
Achilles, and when once thou art within  
The warrior's tent, Achilles will not raise  
His hand to slay, but will restrain the rest.  
He is not mad, nor rash, nor prone to crime, 240  
And will humanely spare a suppliant man."

Thus the swift-footed Iris spake, and then  
Departed. Priam bade his sons prepare  
The strong-wheeled chariot, drawn by mules, and bind  
A coffer on it. He descended next 245  
Into a fragrant chamber, cedar-lined,  
High-roofed, and stored with many things of price,  
And calling Hecuba, his wife, he said:—

"Dear wife, a message from Olympian Jove  
Commands that I betake me to the fleet, 250  
And thence redeem my slaughtered son with gifts  
That may appease Achilles. Tell me now  
How this may seem to thee? for I am moved  
By a strong impulse to approach the ships,  
And venture into the great Grecian camp." 255

He spake: his consort wept, and answered thus:  
"Ah me! the prudence which was once so praised  
By strangers and by those who own thy sway,

Where is it now? Why wouldst thou go alone  
To the Greek fleet, to meet the eye of him 260  
Who slew so many of thy gallant sons?  
An iron heart is thine. If that false man,  
Remorseless as he is, should see thee there  
And seize thee, neither pity nor respect  
Hast thou to hope from him. Let us lament 265  
Our Hector in these halls. A cruel fate  
Spun, when I brought him forth, his thread of life,—  
That far from us his corse should feed the hounds  
Near that fierce man, whose liver I could tear  
From out his bosom. Then the indignities 270  
Done to my son would be repaid, for he  
Was slain, not shunning combat, coward-like,  
But fighting to defend the men of Troy  
And the deep-bosomed Trojan dames. He fell  
Without a thought of flight or of retreat.” 275

And thus the aged, godlike king rejoined:  
“Keep me not back from going, nor be thou  
A bird of evil omen in these halls,  
For thou shalt not persuade me. This I say:  
If any of the dwellers of the earth, 280  
Soothsayer, seer, or priest, had said to me  
What I have heard, I well might deem the words

A lie, and heed them not. But since I heard  
 Myself the mandate from a deity,  
 And saw her face to face, I certainly 285  
 Will go, nor shall the message be in vain.  
 And should it be my fate to perish there  
 Beside the galleys of the mail-clad Greeks,  
 So be it; for Achilles will forthwith  
 Put me to death embracing my poor son, 290  
 And satisfying my desire to weep."

He spake, and, raising the fair coffer-lids,  
 Took out twelve robes of state most beautiful,  
 Twelve single cloaks, as many tapestried mats,  
 And tunics next and mantles twelve of each, 295  
 And ten whole talents of pure gold, which first  
 He weighed. Two burnished tripods from his store  
 He added, and four goblets and a cup  
 Of eminent beauty, which the men of Thrace  
 Gave him when, as an envoy to their coast, 300  
 He came from Troy,—a sumptuous gift, and yet  
 The aged king reserved not even this  
 To deck his palace, such was his desire  
 To ransom his dear son. And then he drave  
 Away the Trojans hovering round his porch, 305  
 Rebuking them with sharp and bitter words:—

“Hence with you, worthless wretches! have ye not  
Sorrow enough at home, that ye are come  
To vex me thus? Or doth it seem to you  
Of little moment, that Saturnian Jove 310  
Hath sent such grief upon me in the loss  
Of my most valiant son? Ye yet will know  
How great that loss has been; for it will be  
A lighter task for the beleaguering Greeks  
To work our ruin, now that he is dead. 315  
But I shall sink to Hades ere mine eyes  
Behold the city sacked and made a spoil.”

He spake, and with his staff he chased away  
The loiterers; forth before the aged man  
They went. With like harsh words he chid his sons. 320  
Helenus, Paris, noble Agathon,  
Pammon, Antiphonus, Deiphobus,  
Polites, great in war, Hippothoüs,  
And gallant Dios, nine in all he called,  
And thus bespake them with reproachful words:— 325

“Make haste, ye idle fellows, my disgrace!  
Would ye had all been slain beside the fleet  
Instead of Hector! Woe is me! the most  
Unhappy of mankind am I, who had  
The bravest sons in all the town of Troy, 330

And none of them, I think, are left to me.  
 Mestor, divine in presence, Troïlus,  
 The gallant knight, and Hector,, he who looked  
 A god among his countrymen,—no son  
 Of man he seemed, but of immortal birth,— 335  
 Those Mars has slain, but these who are my shame  
 Remain,—these liars, dancers, excellent  
 In choirs, whose trade is public robbery  
 Of lambs and kids. Why haste ye not to get  
 My chariot ready, and bestow these things 340  
 Within it, that my journey may begin?"

He spake, and they, in fear of his rebuke,  
 Lifted from out its place the strong-wheeled car,  
 Framed to be drawn by mules, and beautiful,  
 And newly built, and on it they made fast 345  
 The coffer. From its pin they next took down  
 The boxwood mule-yoke, fitted well with rings,  
 And carved with a smooth boss. With this they brought  
 A yoke-band nine ells long, which carefully  
 Adjusting to the polished pole's far end, 350  
 They cast the ring upon the bolt, and thrice  
 Wound the long band on each side of the bolt  
 Around the yoke, and made it fast, and turned  
 The loose ends under. Then they carried forth

The treasures that should ransom Hector's corse ; 355  
And having piled them in the polished car,  
They yoked the hardy, strong-hoofed mules which once  
The Mysians gave to Priam, princely gifts.  
To bear the yoke of Priam they led forth  
The horses which the aged man himself 360  
Fed at the polished manger. These the king  
Yoked, aided by the herald, while in mind,  
Within the palace court, they both revolved  
Their prudent counsels. Hecuba, the queen,  
Came to them in deep sorrow. In her hand 365  
She bore a golden cup of delicate wine,  
That they might make libations and depart.  
She stood before the steeds, and thus she spake :—  
    "Take this, and pour to Father Jove, and pray  
That thou mayst safely leave the enemy's camp 370  
For home, since 't is thy will, though I dissuade,  
To go among the ships. Implore thou then  
The god of Ida and the gatherer  
Of the black tempest, Saturn's son, who looks  
Down on all Troy, to send his messenger, 375  
His swift and favorite bird, of matchless strength,  
On thy right hand, that, with thine eye on him,  
Thou mayst with courage journey to the ships

Of the Greek horsemen. But if Jupiter  
All-seeing should withhold his messenger, 380  
I cannot bid thee, eager as thou art,  
Adventure near the galleys of the Greeks."

And thus the godlike Priam made reply:  
"Dear wife, indeed, I will not disobey  
Thy counsel; meet it is to raise our hands 385  
To Jove, and ask him to be merciful."

He spake, and bade the attendant handmaid pour  
Pure water on his hands, for near him stood  
A maid who came and held a basin forth  
And ewer. When his hands were washed, he took 390  
The goblet from the queen, and then, in prayer,  
Stood in the middle of the court, and poured  
The wine, and, looking heavenward, spake aloud:—

"O Father Jove, most glorious and most great,  
Who rulest all from Ida, let me find 395  
Favor and pity with Achilles. Send  
A messenger, thy own swift, favorite bird,  
Of matchless strength, on my right hand, that I,  
Beholding him, may confidently pass  
To where the fleet of the Greek horsemen lies!" 400

Thus in his prayer he spake, and Jupiter,  
The All-disposer, hearkened, and sent forth

An eagle, bird of surest augury,  
Named the Black Chaser, and by others called  
Percnos, with wings as broad as is the door 405  
Skilfully fashioned for the lofty hall  
Of some rich man, and fastened with a bolt.  
Such ample wings he spread on either side  
As townward on the right they saw him fly.  
They saw and they rejoiced; their hearts grew light 410  
Within their bosoms. Then the aged king  
Hastened to mount the polished car, and drave  
Through vestibule and echoing porch. The mules,  
Harnessed to draw the four-wheeled car, went first,  
Driven by the sage Idæus; after them, 415  
The horses, urged by Priam with the lash  
Rapidly through the city. All his friends  
Followed lamenting, as for one who went  
To meet his death. And now when they had reached  
The plain descending from the town, the sons 420  
And sons-in-law of Priam all returned  
To Ilium, and the twain proceeded on,  
Yet not unmarked by all-beholding Jove,  
Who, moved with pity for the aged man,  
Turned to his well-beloved son and said:— 425  
“Hermes, who more than any other god



Delightest to consort with human-kind,  
And willingly dost listen to their prayers,  
Haste, guide King Priam to the Grecian fleet,  
Yet so that none may see him, and no Greek 430  
Know of his coming, till he stand before  
Pelides." Thus he spake: the messenger  
Who slew the Argus hearkened and obeyed;  
And hastily beneath his feet he bound  
The fair, ambrosial, golden sandals worn 435  
To bear him over ocean like the wind,  
And o'er the boundless land. His wand he took  
Wherewith he seals in sleep the eyes of men,  
And opens them at will. With this in hand,  
The mighty Argus-queller flew, and soon 440  
Was at the Troad and the Hellespont.  
Like to some royal stripling seemed the god,  
In youth's first prime, when youth has most of grace.  
And there the Trojans twain, when they had passed  
The tomb of Ilus, halted with their mules 445  
And horses, that the beasts might drink the stream;  
For twilight now was creeping o'er the earth.  
The herald looked, and saw that Mercury  
Was near, and thus, addressing Priam, said:—  
"Be on thy guard, O son of Dardanus, 450

For here is cause for wariness. I see  
A warrior, and I think he seeks our lives.  
Now let us urge our steeds and fly, or else  
Descend and clasp his knees, and sue for grace."

He spake, and greatly was the aged king 455  
Bewildered by his words; with hair erect  
He stood, and motionless, while Mercury  
Drew near, and took the old man's hand, and asked:—

"Whither, O father, guidest thou thy mules  
And steeds in the dim night, while others sleep? 460  
Fearest thou nothing from the warlike Greeks,  
Thy foes, who hate thee, and are near at hand?  
Should one of them behold thee bearing off  
These treasures in the swiftly darkening night,  
What wouldst thou do? Thou art not young, and he 465  
Who comes with thee is old; ye could not make  
Defence against the foe. Fear nought from me,  
And I will save thee, since thou art so like  
To my own father, from all other harm."

Priam, the godlike ancient, answered thus: 470  
"Thou sayest true, dear son; but sure some god  
Holds over me his kind, protecting hand,  
Who sends a guide like thee to join me here,  
So noble art thou both in form and air,

And gracious are thy thoughts, and blessed they      475  
Who gave thee birth." With that the messenger,  
The Argus-queller, spake again, and said:  
"Most wisely hast thou spoken, aged man.  
But tell, and truly, why thou bearest hence  
This store of treasures among stranger men?      480  
Is it that they may be preserved for thee?  
Or are ye all deserting in alarm  
Your hallowed Troy? for such a man of might  
Was thy brave son who died, that I may say  
The Greeks in battle had no braver man."      485

And Priam, godlike ancient, spake in turn:  
"Who then art thou, and of what parents born,  
Excellent youth, who dost in such kind words  
Speak of the death of my unhappy son?"

The herald, Argus-queller, answered him:      490  
"I see that thou wouldst prove me, aged man,  
By questions touching Hector, whom I oft  
Have seen with mine own eyes in glorious fight,  
Putting the Greeks to rout and slaying them  
By their swift ships with that sharp spear of his.      495  
We stood and marvelled, for Achilles, wroth  
With Agamemnon, would not suffer us  
To join the combat. I attend on him;

The same good galley brought us to this shore,  
And I am one among his Myrmidons. 500  
Polyctor is my father, who is rich,  
And now as old as thou. Six are his sons  
Beside me, I the seventh. In casting lots  
With them, it fell to me that I should come  
To Ilium with Achilles. I am here 505  
In coming from the fleet, for with the dawn  
The dark-eyed Greeks are planning to renew  
The war around the city. They have grown  
Impatient of long idleness; their chiefs  
Seek vainly to restrain their warlike rage." 510

Then spake the godlike ancient, Priam, thus:  
"If thou indeed dost serve Pelides, tell,  
And truly tell me, whether yet my son  
Is at the fleet, or has Achilles cast,  
Torn limb from limb, his body to the hounds?" 515

The herald, Argus-queller, thus replied:  
"O aged monarch, neither have the hounds  
Devoured thy son, nor yet the birds of prey;  
But near the galleys of Achilles still  
He lies neglected and among the tents. 520  
Twelve mornings have beheld him lying there,  
Nor hath corruption touched him, nor the worms

That make the slain their feast begun to feed.  
'T is true that, when the holy morning dawns  
Achilles drags him fiercely round the tomb 525  
Of his dear friend; yet that disfigures not  
The dead. Shouldst thou approach him, thou wouldst see  
With marvelling eyes how fresh and dewy still  
The body lies, the blood all cleansed away,  
Unsoiled in every part, and all the wounds 530  
Closed up wherever made; for many a spear  
Was thrust into his sides. Thus tenderly  
The blessed gods regard thy son, though dead,  
For dearly was he loved by them in life."

He spake; the aged man was comforted, 535  
And said: "'T is meet, O son, that we should pay  
Oblations to the immortals; for my son  
While yet alive neglected not within  
His palace the due worship of the gods  
Who dwell upon Olympus; therefore they 540  
Are mindful of him, even after death.  
Take this magnificent goblet; be my guard,  
And guide me, by the favor of the gods,  
Until I reach Pelides in his tent."

Again the herald, Argus-queller, spake: 545  
"Thou seekest yet to try me, aged man,

Who younger am than thou. Yet think thou not  
That I, without the knowledge of my chief,  
Will take thy gifts; for in my heart I fear  
Achilles, nor would wrong him in the least, 550  
Lest evil come upon me. Yet I go  
Willingly with thee, as thy faithful guide.  
Were it as far as Argos the renowned,  
In a swift gálley, or on foot by land,  
Yet none would dare to harm thee while with me." 555

So Hermes spake, and leaped into the car,  
And took into his hands the lash and reins,  
And breathed into the horses and the mules  
Fresh vigor. Coming to the wall and trench  
About the ships, they found the guard engaged 560  
With their night-meal. The herald Argicide  
Poured sleep upon them all, and quickly flung  
The gates apart, and pushed aside the bars,  
And led in Priam, with the costly gifts  
Heaped on the car. They went until they reached 565  
The lofty tent in which Achilles sat,  
Reared by the Myrmidons to lodge their king,  
With timbers of hewn fir, and over-roofed  
With thatch, for which the meadows had been mown,  
And fenced for safety round with rows of stakes. 570

One fir-tree bar made fast its gate, which three  
Strong Greeks were wont to raise aloft, and three  
Were needed to take down the massive beam.

Achilles wielded the vast weight alone;

Beneficent Hermes opened it before

575

The aged man, and brought the treasures in,

Designed for swift Achilles. Then he left

The car and stood upon the ground, and said:—

“O aged monarch, I am Mercury,

An ever-living god; my father, Jove,

580

Bade me attend thy journey. I shall now

Return, nor must Achilles look on me;

It is not meet that an immortal god

Should openly befriend a mortal man.

Enter, approach Pelides, clasp his knees;

585

Entreat him by his father, and his son,

And fair-haired mother; so shall he be moved.”

Thus having spoken, Hermes took his way

Back to the Olympian summit. Priam then

Sprang from the chariot to the ground. He left

590

Idæus there to guard the steeds and mules,

And, hastening to the tent where, dear to Jove,

Achilles lodged, he found the chief within,

While his companions sat apart, save two,—

Automedon the brave, and Alcimus, 595  
Who claimed descent from Mars. These stood near by,  
And ministered to Peleus' son, who then  
Was closing a repast, and had just left  
The food and wine, and still the table stood.  
Unmarked the royal Priam entered in, 600  
And, coming to Achilles, clasped his knees,  
And kissed those fearful slaughter-dealing hands,  
By which so many of his sons had died.  
And as, when some blood-guilty man, whose hand  
In his own land has slain a fellow-man, 605  
Flees to another country, and the abode  
Of some great chieftain, all men look on him  
Astonished,—so, when godlike Priam first  
Was seen, Achilles was amazed, and all  
Looked on each other, wondering at the sight. 610  
And thus King Priam supplicating spake:—  
“Think of thy father, an old man like me,  
Godlike Achilles! On the dreary verge  
Of closing life he stands, and even now  
Haply is fiercely pressed by those who dwell 615  
Around him, and has none to shield his age  
From war and its disasters. Yet his heart  
Rejoices when he hears thou yet dost live,



And every day he hopes that his dear son  
Will come again from Troy. My lot is hard, 620  
For I was father of the bravest sons  
In all wide Troy, and none are left me now.  
Fifty were with me when the men of Greece  
Arrived upon our coast; nineteen of these  
Owned the same mother, and the rest were born 625  
Within my palaces. Remorseless Mars  
Already had laid lifeless most of these,  
And Hector, whom I cherished most, whose arm  
Defended both our city and ourselves,  
Him didst thou lately slay while combating 630  
For his dear country. For his sake I come  
To the Greek fleet, and to redeem his corse  
I bring uncounted ransom. O, revere  
The gods, Achilles, and be merciful,  
Calling to mind thy father! happier he 635  
Than I; for I have borne what no man else  
That dwells on earth could bear,—have laid my lips  
Upon the hand of him who slew my son.”

He spake: Achilles sorrowfully thought  
Of his own father. By the hand he took 640  
The suppliant, and with gentle force removed  
The old man from him. Both in memory

Of those they loved were weeping. The old king,  
With many tears, and rolling in the dust  
Before Achilles, mourned his gallant son. 645  
Achilles sorrowed for his father's sake,  
And then bewailed Patroclus, and the sound  
Of lamentation filled the tent. At last  
Achilles, when he felt his heart relieved  
By tears, and that strong grief had spent its force, 650  
Sprang from his seat; then lifting by the hand  
The aged man, and pitying his white head  
And his white chin, he spake these wingèd words:—  
“Great have thy sufferings been, unhappy king!  
How couldst thou venture to approach alone 655  
The Grecian fleet, and show thyself to him  
Who slew so many of thy valiant sons?  
An iron heart is thine. But seat thyself,  
And let us, though afflicted grievously,  
Allow our woes to sleep awhile, for grief 660  
Indulged can bring no good. The gods ordain  
The lot of man to suffer, while themselves  
Are free from care. Beside Jove's threshold stand  
Two casks of gifts for man. One cask contains  
The evil, one the good, and he to whom 665  
The Thunderer gives them mingled sometimes falls

Into misfortune, and is sometimes crowned  
With blessings. But the man to whom he gives  
The evil only stands a mark exposed  
To wrong, and, chased by grim calamity, 670  
Wanders the teeming earth, alike unloved  
By gods and men. So did the gods bestow  
Munificent gifts on Peleus from his birth,  
For eminent was he among mankind  
For wealth and plenty; o'er the Myrmidons 675  
He ruled, and, though a mortal, he was given  
A goddess for a wife. Yet did the gods  
Add evil to the good, for not to him  
Was born a family of kingly sons  
Within his house, successors to his reign. 680  
One short-lived son is his, nor am I there  
To cherish him in his old age; but here  
Do I remain, far from my native land,  
In Troy, and causing grief to thee and thine.  
Of thee too, aged king, they speak, as one 685  
Whose wealth was large in former days, when all  
That Lesbos, seat of Macar, owns was thine,  
And all in Phrygia and the shores that bound  
The Hellespont; men said thou didst excel  
All others in thy riches and thy sons. 690

But since the gods have brought this strife on thee  
War and perpetual slaughter of brave men  
Are round thy city. Yet be firm of heart,  
Nor grieve forever. Sorrow for thy son  
Will profit nought; it cannot bring the dead  
To life again, and while thou dost afflict  
Thyself for him fresh woes may fall on thee."

695

And thus the godlike Priam, aged king,  
Made answer: "Bid me not be seated here,  
Nursling of Jove, while Hector lies among  
Thy tents unburied. Let me ransom him  
At once, that I may look on him once more  
With my own eyes. Receive the many gifts  
We bring thee, and mayst thou possess them long,  
And reach thy native shore, since by thy grace  
I live and yet behold the light of day."

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705

Achilles heard, and, frowning, thus rejoined:  
"Anger me not, old man; 't was in my thought  
To let thee ransom Hector. To my tent  
The mother came who bore me, sent from Jove,  
The daughter of the Ancient of the Sea,  
And I perceive, nor can it be concealed,  
O Priam, that some god hath guided thee  
To our swift galleys; for no mortal man,

710

Though in his prime of youthful strength, would dare 715  
To come into the camp; he could not pass  
The guard, nor move the beams that bar our gates.  
So then remind me of my griefs no more,  
Lest, suppliant as thou art, I leave thee not  
Unharm'd, and thus transgress the laws of Jove." 720

He spake: the aged man in fear obeyed.

And then Pelides like a lion leaped  
Forth from the door, yet not alone he went;  
For of his comrades two—Automedon,  
The hero, and his comrade Alcimus, 725  
He whom Achilles held in most esteem  
After the slain Patroclus—followed him.  
The mules and horses they unyoked, and led  
The aged monarch's clear-voiced herald in,  
And bade him sit. Then from the polished car 730  
They took the costly ransom of the corse  
Of Hector, save two cloaks, which back they laid  
With a fair tunic, that their chief might give  
The body shrouded to be borne to Troy.  
And then he called the maidens, bidding them 735  
Wash and anoint the dead, yet far apart  
From Priam, lest, with looking on his son,  
The grief within his heart might rise uncurbed

To anger, and Achilles in his rage  
Might stay him and transgress the laws of Jove. 740  
And when the handmaids finished, having washed  
The body and anointed it with oil,  
And wrapped a sumptuous cloak and tunic round  
The limbs, Achilles lifted it himself  
And placed it on a bier. His comrades gave 745  
Their aid, and raised it to the polished car.  
When all was done, Achilles groaned, and called  
By name the friend he dearly loved, and said:—  
    “O my Patroclus, be not wroth with me  
Shouldst thou in Hades hear that I restore 750  
Hector to his dear father, since I take  
A ransom not unworthy; but of this  
I yield to thee the portion justly thine.”  
    So spake the godlike warrior, and withdrew  
Into his tent, and took the princely seat 755  
From which he had arisen, opposite  
To that of Priam, whom he thus bespake:—  
    “Behold thy son is ransomed, aged man,  
As thou hast asked, and lies upon his bier.  
Thou shalt behold him with the early dawn, 760  
And bear him hence. Now let us break our fast,  
For even Niobe, the golden-haired,

Refrained not from her food, though children twelve  
Perished within her palace,—six young sons  
And six fair daughters. Phœbus slew the sons 765  
With arrows from his silver bow, incensed  
At Niobe, while Dian, archer-queen,  
Struck down the daughters; for the mother dared  
To make herself the peer of rosy-checked  
Latona, who, she boastfully proclaimed, 770  
Had borne two children only, while herself  
Had brought forth many. Yet, though only two,  
The children of Latona took the lives  
Of all her own. Nine days the corpses lay  
In blood, and there was none to bury them, 775  
For Jove had changed the dwellers of the place  
To stone; but on the tenth the gods of heaven  
Gave burial to the dead. Yet Niobe,  
Though spent with weeping long, did not refrain  
From food. And now forever mid the rocks 780  
And desert hills of Sipylus, where lie,  
Fame says, the couches of the goddess-nymphs,  
Who lead the dance where Achelous flows,  
Although she be transformed to stone, she broods  
Over the woes inflicted by the gods. 785  
But now, O noble Ancient, let us sit

At our repast, and thou mayst afterward  
Mourn thy beloved son, while bearing him  
Homeward, to be bewailed with many tears."

Achilles, the swift-footed, spake, and left 790  
His seat, and, slaying a white sheep, he bade  
His comrades flay and dress it. Then they carved  
The flesh in portions which they fixed on spits,  
And roasted carefully, and drew them back.

And then Automedon distributed 795  
The bread in shapely canisters around  
The table, while Achilles served the flesh,  
And all put forth their hands and shared the feast.

But when their thirst and hunger were appeased,  
Dardanian Priam fixed a wondering look 800  
Upon Achilles, who in nobleness

Of form was like the gods. Achilles fixed  
A look of equal wonder on his guest,  
Dardanian Priam, for he much admired  
His gracious aspect and his pleasant speech. 805

And when at length they both withdrew their gaze,  
Priam, the godlike Ancient, spake, and said:—

"Nursling of Jove, dismiss me speedily  
To rest, that we may lie, and be refreshed  
With gentle slumbers. Never have these eyes 810



Been closed beneath their lids, since by thy hand  
My Hector lost his life; and evermore  
I mourn and cherish all my griefs, and writhe  
Upon the ground within my palace courts;  
But I have taken food at last, and drunk 815  
Draughts of red wine, untasted till this hour."

Achilles bade the attending men and maids  
Place couches in the porch, and over them  
Draw sumptuous purple mats on which to lay  
Embroidered tapestries, and on each of these 820  
Spread a broad, fleecy mantle, covering all.  
Forth went the train with torches in their hands,  
And quickly spread two couches. Then the swift  
Achilles pleasantly to Priam said:—

"Sleep, excellent old man, without the tent, 825  
Lest some one of our counsellors arrive,  
Such as oft come within my tent to sit  
And talk of warlike matters. Seeing thee  
In the dark hours of night, he might relate  
The tale to Agamemnon, king of men, 830  
And hinder thus the ransom of thy son.  
But say, and truly say, how many days  
Requirest thou to pay the funeral rites  
To noble Hector, so that I may rest  
As many, and restrain the troops from war." 835

Then answered godlike Priam, aged king:  
"Since, then, thou wilt, Achilles, that we pay  
The rites of burial to my noble son,  
I own the favor. Well thou knowest how  
We Trojans are constrained to keep within 840  
The city walls, for it is far to bring  
Wood from the mountains, and we fear to dare  
The journey. Nine days would we mourn the dead  
Within our dwellings, and upon the tenth  
Would bury him, and make a solemn feast, 845  
And the next day would rear his monument,  
And on the twelfth, if needful, fight again."

And swift Achilles, godlike chief, rejoined:  
"Be it, O reverend Priam, as thou wilt,  
And for that space will I delay the war." 850

He spake, and that the aged king might feel  
No fear, he grasped his right hand at the wrist;  
And then King Priam and the herald went  
To sleep within the porch, but wary still.  
Achilles slumbered in his stately tent, 855  
The rosy-cheeked Briseis at his side,  
And all the other gods and men who fought  
In chariots gave themselves to slumber, save  
Beneficent Hermes; sleep came not to him,

For still he meditated how to bring 860  
King Priam back from the Achaian fleet  
Unnoticed by the watchers at the gate.  
So at the monarch's head he stood, and spake:—

“O aged king, thou givest little heed  
To danger, sleeping thus amid thy foes, 865  
Because Achilles spares thee. Thou hast paid  
Large ransom for thy well-beloved son,  
And yet the sons whom thou hast left in Troy  
Would pay three times that ransom for thy life,  
Should Agamemnon, son of Atreus, learn— 870  
Or any of the Greeks—that thou art here.”

He spake: the aged king in fear awaked  
The herald. Hermes yoked the steeds and mules,  
And drave them quickly through the camp unmarked  
By any there. But when they reached the ford 875  
Where Xanthus, progeny of Jupiter,  
Rolls the smooth eddies of his stream, the god  
Departed for the Olympian height, and Morn  
In saffron robes o'erspread the Earth with light.  
Townward they urged the steeds, and as they went 880  
Sorrowed and wailed: the mules conveyed the dead,  
And they were seen by none of all the men  
And graceful dames of Troy save one alone.

Cassandra, beautiful as Venus, stood  
On Pergamus, and from its height discerned 885  
Her father, standing on the chariot-seat,  
And knew the herald, him whose voice so oft  
Summoned the citizens, and knew the dead  
Stretched on a litter drawn by mules. She raised  
Her voice, and called to all the city thus: — 890  
    “O Trojan men and women, hasten forth  
To look on Hector, if ye e’er rejoiced  
To see him coming from the field alive,  
The pride of Troy, and all who dwell in her.”  
    She spake, and suddenly was neither man 895  
Nor woman left within the city bounds.  
Deep grief was on them all; they went to meet,  
Near to the gates, the monarch bringing home  
The dead. And first the wife whom Hector loved  
Rushed with his reverend mother to the car 900  
As it rolled on, and, plucking out their hair,  
Touched with their hands the forehead of the dead,  
While round it pressed the multitude, and wept,  
And would have wept before the gates all day,  
Even to the set of sun, in bitter grief 905  
For Hector’s loss, had not the aged man  
Addressed the people from his chariot-seat:

"Give place to me, and let the mules pass on,  
 And ye may weep your ill when once the dead  
 Is laid within the palace." As he spake, 910  
 The throng gave way and let the chariot pass;  
 And having brought it to the royal halls,  
 On a fair couch they laid the corse, and placed  
 Singers beside it, leaders of the dirge,  
 Who sang a sorrowful, lamenting strain, 915  
 And all the women answered it with sobs.  
 White-armed Andromache in both her hands  
 Took warlike Hector's head, and over it  
 Began the lamentation midst them all: —  
 "Thou hast died young, my husband, leaving me 920  
 In this thy home a widow, and one son,  
 An infant yet. To an unhappy pair  
 He owes his birth, and never will, I fear,  
 Bloom into youth; for ere that day will Troy  
 Be overthrown, since thou, its chief defence, 925  
 Art dead, the guardian of its walls and all  
 Its noble matrons and its speechless babes,  
 Yet to be carried captive far away,  
 And I among them, in the hollow barks;  
 And thou, my son, wilt either go with me, 930  
 Where thou shalt toil at menial tasks for some

Pitiless master ; or perhaps some Greek  
Will seize thy little arm, and in his rage  
Will hurl thee from a tower and dash thee dead,  
Remembering how thy father, Hector, slew 935  
His brother, son, or father ; for the hand  
Of Hector forced full many a Greek to bite  
The dust of earth. Not slow to smite was he  
In the fierce conflict ; therefore all who dwell  
Within the city sorrow for his fall. 940

Thou bringest an unutterable grief,  
O Hector, on thy parents, and on me  
The sharpest sorrows. Thou didst not stretch forth  
Thy hands to me, in dying, from thy couch,  
Nor speak a word to comfort me, which I 945  
Might ever think of night and day with tears."

So spake the weeping wife : the women all  
Mingled their wail with hers, and Hecuba  
Took up the passionate lamentation next : —

"O Hector, thou who wert most fondly loved 950  
Of all my sons ! While yet thou wert alive,  
Dear wert thou to the gods, who even now,  
When death has overtaken thee, bestow  
Such care upon thee. All my other sons  
Whom swift Achilles took in war he sold 955

At Samos, Imbrus, by the barren sea,  
And Lemnos harborless. But as for thee,  
When he had taken with his cruel spear  
Thy life, he dragged thee round and round the tomb  
Of his young friend, Patroclus, whom thy hand 960  
Had slain, yet raised he not by this the dead;  
And now thou liest in the palace here,  
Fresh and besprinkled as with early dew,  
Like one just slain with silent arrows aimed  
By Phœbus, bearer of the silver bow.” 965

Weeping she spake, and woke in all who heard  
Grief without measure. Helen, last of all,  
Took up the lamentation, and began:—

“O Hector, who wert dearest to my heart  
Of all my husband’s brothers,—for the wife 970  
Am I of godlike Paris, him whose fleet  
Brought me to Troy,—would I had sooner died!  
And now the twentieth year is past since first  
I came a stranger from my native shore,  
Yet have I never heard from thee a word 975  
Of anger or reproach. And when the sons  
Of Priam, and his daughters, and the wives  
Of Priam’s sons, in all their fair array,  
Taunted me grievously, or Hecuba

Herself,—for Priam ever was to me 980  
 A gracious father,—thou didst take my part  
 With kindly admonitions, and restrain  
 Their tongues with soft address and gentle words.  
 Therefore my heart is grieved, and I bewail  
 Thee and myself at once,—unhappy me! 985  
 For now I have no friend in all wide Troy,—  
 None to be kind to me: they hate me all.”

Weeping she spake: the mighty throng again  
 Answered with wailing. Priam then addressed  
 The people: “Now bring wood, ye men of Troy, 990  
 Into the city. Let there be no fear  
 Of ambush from the Greeks, for when of late  
 I left Achilles at the dark-hulled barks,  
 He gave his promise to molest no more  
 The men of Troy till the twelfth morn shall rise.” 995

He spake, and speedily they yoked the mules  
 And oxen to the wains, and came in throngs  
 Before the city walls. Nine days they toiled  
 To bring the trunks of trees, and when the tenth  
 Arose to light the abodes of men, they brought 1000  
 The corse of valiant Hector from the town  
 With many tears, and laid it on the wood  
 High up, and flung the fire to light the pile.



Now when the early rosy-fingered Dawn  
Looked forth, the people gathered round the pile 1005  
Of glorious Hector. When they all had come  
Together, first they quenched the funeral fires,  
Wherever they had spread, with dark-red wine,  
And then his brothers and companions searched  
For the white bones. In sorrow and in tears, 1010  
That streaming stained their cheeks, they gathered them,  
And placed them in a golden urn. O'er this  
They drew a covering of soft purple robes,  
And laid it in a hollow grave, and piled  
Fragments of rock above it, many and huge. 1015  
In haste they reared the tomb, with sentries set  
On every side, lest all too soon the Greeks  
Should come in armor to renew the war.  
When now the tomb was built, the multitude  
Returned, and in the halls where Priam dwelt,  
Nursling of Jove, were feasted royally.  
Such was the mighty Hector's burial rite.

THE END.

















